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HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SOVIET JEWRY STRUGGLE

DECEMBER 4, 1987

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CONTENTS

DECEMBER 4, 1987

WITNESSES

	Page
Ida Nudel	25
Yuli Edelshtein	25
Natan Sharansky	28
Josif Mendelevitch	30
Lev and Inna Elbert	32
Vladimir and Maria Slepak	39, 40

APPENDIX

Appendix A—Testimony of Vladimir Lifshitz	57

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SOVIET JEWRY STRUGGLE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1987

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Washington, DC.

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, at 9:30 a.m., Representative Steny H. Hoyer (Chairman) and Senator Dennis DeConcini (Co-chairman) presiding.

In attendance: Commissioners/Representatives Christopher H. Smith, Edward J. Markey; Senators Frank Lautenberg, Alfonse D'Amato, John Heinz, James McClure, Wyche Fowler and Commissioner from Department of State Richard Schifter. Also participating Representatives James H. Scheuer, Tom Lantos, Mel Levine, Benjamin A. Gilman, and John R. Miller.

Also in attendance: Mary Sue Hafner, deputy staff director and general counsel, and Jesse Jacobs, staff assistant.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN HOYER

Chairman HOYER. If everybody would have a seat, I want to call to order this hearing of the Helsinki Commission.

Fellow Commissioners and distinguished witnesses, I want to welcome you here on this very special occasion. Today we have before us seven individuals whose names are very familiar to all of us, but whose story must be told over and over again.

Theirs is the story of human dignity, of the yearning to be free, and it is a story repeated day after day by the thousands of Soviet Jews who have been condemned to live it.

We hear from our witnesses at an appropriate time. In 4 days the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union will begin their summit meetings and finalize an INF Treaty. It is a time of hope, expectation and accomplishment. Thousands of journalists will descend on Washington. The world will be looking with rapt attention.

The hope is that the summit will be another step toward reducing nuclear tension in Europe and around the world. Our witnesses will help us today put that hope into perspective, for their message is that we must measure our hope not only by the number of accords we sign, but by how those accords are observed.

And as they relate to us the plight of their fellow Soviet Jews, they will describe how the Soviet Union continues to violate the basic principles of one of these agreements, the Helsinki accords.

I have had the privilege of meeting some of our witnesses, indeed, all of our witnesses, but some of our witnesses while they were in the Soviet Union struggling to be free. They shared with me, as they have shared with others on this panel and in the Congress and throughout the United States, their despair on each visa denial and the humiliation of dealing with Soviet bureaucrats who lord power over their individuals lives.

Today we will hear from eight who have been set free: Natan Sharansky, Ida Nudel, Vladimir and Maria Slepak, whose plane has been delayed and we hope they are here by the time we conclude, Yuli Edelshtein, Josif Mendelevitch, and Lev and Inna Elbert.

But to us they represent more than seven freed refuseniks. They have become symbols of a struggle because they dared against all odds to challenge a system of injustice; because they dared to standup for their basic human rights; and they speak for the thousands of nameless brothers and sisters who wait and wait and wait for the word that they will be free to emigrate, free to practice their faith, free to exercise their human rights.

The fact that our seven witnesses are here today while others languish in the Soviet Union is mere proof of the arbitrary nature of the Soviet system. Despite Mr. Gorbachev's claim in his NBC interview that permission to leave has been granted to almost everyone who wanted it, there are at least 10,000 and perhaps as many as 30,000 Soviet Jews who have been refused permission to leave.

Hundreds of thousands more are estimated to have received invitations from Israel, but await a more favorable climate before taking the risk, of which we will hear much today, of applying to emigrate.

To make matters worse, Soviet authorities appear to be employing with more regularity the specious argument of state security to keep many from leaving and to discourage more from applying. I know that Lev Elbert will have something to say of that.

The Kremlin is intent on making sure that for Soviet Jews there is no easy way out.

We have seen some encouraging signs in the past year, particularly a substantial rise in emigration figures, but substantial only if compared with 1986 and 1985. Compared with the high watermark of 1979, those figures are still less than 20 percent improvement.

But the more than 6,000 who have left is a mere pittance compared to those who want to leave and should be permitted to do so under the Helsinki Final Act and the U.N. documents referenced in that Act.

So we say to Mr. Gorbachev on the eve of the summit: "let these people go. Observe your Helsinki promises."

I and the Commission and other members who join us today are honored to have these witnesses here today. Just as surely as they open our eyes, they will touch our hearts.

We have had some good news and I think it ought not to go without observance at this hearing, that in the last few days we have heard that Alexander Ioffee, Alexander Kholmiansky, Pavel Abra-

movich, Mark Terlitsky, Naun Kogan, Judith Ratner-Bialy, Victor Faermark, Victor Novikov have received good news.

I might say that each of the members on this panel have been working towards resolving those specific cases, and hundreds and thousands more, and I would like to take this opportunity to ask the ladies and gentlemen of the Senate and House who have just joined us to make brief opening statements, realizing that the people that we want to hear from are seated in front of us. So they will be very, very brief, I am sure.

First, I would like to introduce and turn to the Cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, Senator Dennis DeConcini.

Senator DeConcini.

STATEMENT OF COCHAIRMAN DENNIS DeCONCINI

Cochairman DECONCINI. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I want to compliment you and the staff and our witnesses and extend a very warm welcome to each one of them.

To see all of you here today is perhaps the most memorable occasion of my 11 years in the Senate. Had I been asked a year or so ago about the likelihood of hearing Yuli Edelshtein, Lev and Inna Elbert, Ida Nudel, Natan Sharansky and Vladimir and Maria Slepak and others to testify before the Congress of the United States, I would have said it would have taken a miracle.

Having met some of them in the Soviet Union and realizing the difficulties and the despair, but the determination that they have, it is a great day. You and all of those in the Soviet Union who are still fighting to have their individual rights and the right to emigrate and the right to freedom of conscience, your presence is living proof that people ultimately determine their own destiny, that governments can forestall that and put in many roadblocks, but ultimately right prevails and determination prevails.

We have had some good news. The Ioffees have been friends of mine for 10 years now. I spoke to him yesterday. His first response was, "Remember those that have not been granted permission to leave," and I think it is dedication like that that spurs all of us on to continue this effort. We will not relent.

Mr. Gorbachev and our President have an opportunity to set the stage for true compliance with the Helsinki Accord when they meet, beginning the summit next week. I commend the President for his double billing because I believe it is not only arms control, but the degree to which the Soviets have not complied with the Helsinki Accord that will be part of that summit discussion.

We, another branch of government, has just as great a responsibility, and we will continue to pursue that. With your leadership, Mr. Chairman, and with your very wise advice to keep remarks short, I will put the balance of my remarks in the statement so that we can hear from the witnesses.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Cochairman DeConcini follows:]

STATEMENT
by
SENATOR DENNIS DeCONCINI
HEARING: THE SOVIET JEWRY STRUGGLE
DECEMBER 4, 1987

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our witnesses. To see all of you together and free is perhaps one of the most memorable occasions of my eleven years as a U.S. Senator. Had I been asked a year ago about the likelihood of hearing Yuli Edelstein, Lev and Inna Elbert, Ida Nudel, Natan Shcharansky and Vladimir and Maria Slepak testify at a Congressional hearing in Washington this year, I would probably have responded that it would take a miracle.

You and all those in the Soviet Union who are still fighting for their individual rights have helped create that miracle through your courage and your faith. Your presence is living proof that it is people who ultimately determine their own destinies, not governments. It is governments who in the end must answer to their people.

The struggle of Soviet Jews has been a long and difficult one. Perhaps the hardest part of all to accept about this struggle is the fact that it doesn't have to be. The tragedy of the Soviet's treatment of their citizens is that many would never leave their country if they could simply exercise the basic human freedoms contained in the Helsinki Final Act.

The theme which runs through this document is that of trust. Trust among people which leads to trust among nations. In America where we the people shape our government and our laws according to values we cherish, it is difficult to understand that the government of another major power could be afraid of its greatest resource, its citizens. Men and women who could contribute so much to their country's development if they were only accorded respect and the freedom to fulfill their own individual potential.

President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev are about to begin a Summit at which both arms control and human rights will be on the same agenda. I commend the President for this double billing because I believe it is not only arms control but the degree to which the Soviet Union complies with its Helsinki commitments which will determine the true nature of our relationship. Substantive progress on arms reduction depends on the extent to which we trust one another. I do not believe the American people will ever put much faith in a government which professes peace but denies its citizens their individual rights. You and those like you prove daily that the human spirit is a force far greater than the force of nations. It is testimony such as yours which provides an account of a government's actions, not its words, that will help us maintain a realistic and balanced perspective towards the Soviet Union.

Chairman HOYER. Without objection.

I would now like to recognize Chris Smith, a member of the Helsinki Commission, Mr. Smith from New Jersey.

BRIEF OPENING REMARKS OF REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, would like to make a few, very brief opening remarks.

Mr. Chairman, it is a very high honor and a very distinct privilege to welcome our distinguished witnesses to this hearing this morning, witnesses who have demonstrated to the world the value of freedom, the price that at times must be endured to secure that freedom, and the depth and tenacity of the human spirit to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Clearly, each of our witnesses is a moral giant. Each has risen to the challenge to overcome repression and pervasive harassment. Each has paid a considerable price in terms of suffering to their persons, as well as to their families, and we are deeply inspired by your courage and your commitment to principle.

This hearing comes at a propitious time, on the eve of the historic summit, a time when maximum force and focus and scrutiny must be placed on the repression of Soviet Jews and others in the Soviet Union.

I look forward to the collective testimonies of our cherished friends who are here today, and their friends who await permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union to Israel and to live in freedom in that country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend you for calling this hearing at this very important time.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Smith.

Senator John Heinz of Pennsylvania. Senator Heinz is a longtime member of the Commission.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN HEINZ

Senator HEINZ. Mr. Chairman, I commend you and most of all, I commend the people we will hear from in just a few minutes for being among the most outstanding fighters for human rights ever to have walked on the earth, let alone in the Soviet Union.

We have seven individuals who have paid an enormous price for the courage that they have exerted, and they have been fighting a battle for the principle of human rights that is literally unrivaled, and the challenge to us is that we must never forget all the others for whom they have been fighting.

Glad as we are that they are all here, I think we should be under no illusions as to why they are able to be here, and that is, that in just a few days Mikhail Gorbachev will come to Washington. Tomorrow and the day after tomorrow there will be hundreds of thousands of people who will gather on the Mall to demonstrate that Soviet Jewry and human rights is always on the table when American officials talk with Soviet officials, and that is why I believe we have the opportunity to have this distinguished group here.

It is a very tough government, as these people before us know, so tough that words really fail, but tough as they are, they really did

not want to hear from President Reagan or from Secretary Shultz, words like Nudel or Elbert or Edelshtein or Slepak when Secretary General Gorbachev arrived here, and that, I think, is why these brave people have been released.

It also signifies that Americans have come a long way in their understanding of human rights, that we can perhaps achieve bilateral improvement in the arms area, but that does not mean we have to yield one inch on human rights. Indeed, it means we should encourage and increase the pressure in the area of human rights.

That is the purpose of this hearing today. That is the purpose of the march on Sunday, and when some of us have the opportunity to meet with Mr. Gorbachev and his delegation, as many of us will on several occasions over the next few days, I intend to continue to press, as do many of my colleagues, the same issues we will be talking about today.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator.

Next I would like to call upon Congressman Ben Gilman of New York, member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE BENJAMIN A. GILMAN FROM NEW YORK

Representative GILMAN. Thank you, Chairman Hoyer, and I want to commend you and the Commissioners for arranging this distinguished panel to come to visit with us.

We welcome all of them to Washington, to the House Foreign Affairs Committee room, and to the Commission. Our gathering today is really a bittersweet one, indeed, for we have with us our prominent former refuseniks and prisoners of conscience. For that we are grateful. They continue to be eloquent voices for the hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews and other minorities denied their basic cultural and religious freedoms.

Natan Sharansky, Ida Nudel, Yuli Edelshtein, Lev Elbert, Josif Mendelevitch, we rejoice in their presence this morning, and yet we are cognizant of the fact that the struggle still goes on as before. Last month some 900 Soviet Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union for a total this year to date of little over 7,000, and while we appreciate the mild increase in emigration accorded to our brothers and sisters behind the Iron Curtain, we realize that more and more families are being refused the right to apply or are being hindered by bureaucratic regulations in receiving permission.

On the eve of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, this hearing serves as an important tool and reminder to all of us that the Soviets' priority that they place on human rights and human dignity is still something to be desired, and hopefully it will serve to highlight those matters of noncompliance that still need to be addressed.

We look forward to hearing from our distinguished panelists this morning, with certain knowledge that with their expertise, their experience, their heartbreaking experience and guidance, we can continue, with their help, to persevere in our efforts to secure the freedom of those still denied the opportunity to emigrate.

Their rights under an international agreement are at stake here, as are the very lives of those still denied the freedom of movement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Gilman.

Now, I would like to introduce with a great deal of personal pride because as Chairman of this Commission the Senator showed a lot of commitment and organizational skill, and he is my good friend, Senator D'Amato from New York.

Senator.

Senator D'AMATO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. He is also the ranking Republican on the Commission.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO FROM NEW YORK

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, let me thank you and commend you and Senator DeConcini and the staff for putting together probably the most distinguished panel of witnesses ever to testify before this Commission, indeed, maybe before any congressional committee.

Let me also say, Mr. Chairman, that I am anxious to listen to our witnesses, but I would make this observation. I watched with deep interest on Monday evening, as I think many Americans did, Mikhail Gorbachev as he took his "glasnost" show on the road. I am wondering what our witnesses' feelings were as they listened to Gorbachev.

I listened to his comments on emigration and family reunification. To be quite candid, probably all of our Presidential candidates wish they had and could conduct the kind of media effort that Mr. Gorbachev has become renowned for, Mr. Chairman. We hear this man talk about openness and talk about human rights, saying, "that we in the United States were organizing a 'brain drain.'" He said that we were, "exhorting Soviet citizens to leave their country." Finally, he entered into the same old, tired litany about the reasons that people were being denied family reunification: state security.

There is not a member of this panel, Mr. Chairman, who could not document cases where that tired, tired excuse has been brought up of people who have not had a job in 15 or 20 years and still the excuse of state security is raised as the reason the Soviet authorities denied them permission to emigrate.

And so while we all fervently hope and work and wish and pray for peace, for security, for a successful arms agreement and treaty, Mr. Chairman, the record and the promises Mr. Gorbachev has put forth are two distinctly different things.

I think it takes men and women of such courage as you have brought together, and let me, again, Mr. Chairman, congratulate you and my good friend, Senator DeConcini, our cochairman, for organizing on such short notice this very distinguished hearing today. The American people will not be lulled into believing that all is well when there is a lot that remains to be done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Prepared statement of Senator D'Amato follows:]

Prepared Statement of Senator Alfonse D'Amato

SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO

OPENING STATEMENT

FOR CSCE HEARING ON

THE SOVIET JEWISH STRUGGLE

MR. CHAIRMAN:

ON THE EVE OF THE SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT REAGAN AND GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV, IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT WE REVIEW THE STATUS OF THE SOVIET JEWISH STRUGGLE. IT IS A STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM TO EMIGRATE AND, FOR THOSE CHOOSING TO REMAIN IN THE SOVIET UNION, FOR FREEDOM TO EXERCISE THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND FOR FREEDOM TO RETAIN AND TRANSMIT THEIR CULTURAL HERITAGE TO THEIR CHILDREN.

THE PANEL OF WITNESSES APPEARING BEFORE US TODAY ARGUABLY REPRESENTS THE CORE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR SOVIET JEWRY OVER THE PAST DECADE. THEIR LEADERSHIP AND COURAGE UNDER UNIMAGINABLY HARSH AND CRUEL TRFATMENT WAS A BRIGHT BEACON OF MORAL PURPOSE FOR ALL OF US. THEY SET THE EXAMPLE, STANDING UP AGAINST THE GREATEST TYRANNY THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN, WITH ONLY THEIR FAITH AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE RIGHTNESS OF THEIR CAUSE TO SUPPORT THEM. THEY EACH PAID A FEARSOME PRICE FOR THEIR ACTIVISM AND LEADERSHIP.

THIS SUNDAY, THE 6TH OF DECEMBER, WASHINGTON, D.C. WILL HOST WHAT MAY WELL BE THE LARGEST PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION IN ITS HISTORY. JEWS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY -- INDEED, FROM ALL

OVER THE WORLD -- ARE TRAVELLING TO WASHINGTON TO EXPRESS THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH SOVIET JEWS AND TO PRESS GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV TO COMPLY WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS THE SOVIET UNION HAS FREELY GIVEN -- COMMITMENTS TO FREEDOM TO LEAVE AND RETURN TO ONE'S COUNTRY, TO RESPECT THE FREEEDOM OF THOUGHT, RELIGION, CONSCIENCE, AND BELIEF, AND TO RESPECT AND PROTECT THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ALL OF ITS CITIZENS.

THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR THIS MASSIVE OUTPOURING OF SENTIMENT. THE SOVIET UNION HAS VIOLATED AND IS CONTINUING TO VIOLATE THESE SOLEMN INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS. BEFORE THE UNITED STATES IS RE-INFECTED WITH THE FEVER OF DETENTE, SUCH AN EXPRESSION OF DETERMINATION AND CONCERN SHOULD HAVE A SOBERING EFFECT.

MANY PEOPLE EXPECT GORBACHEV TO BE GENEROUS AT THE SUMMIT -- TO SOLVE THE REMAINING HIGH PROFILE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES AND MAKE PROMISES FOR THE FUTURE. INDEED, IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THERE HAS BEEN PROGRESS IN RESOLVING MANY LONG -STANDING CASES. ALL OF OUR WITNESSES TODAY, EXCEPT NATAN SHARANSKY, ARE PERSONAL BENEFICIARIES OF THIS TREND, HAVING REACHED THE WEST IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS.

GORBACHEV'S REMARKS IN HIS TELEVISED INTERVIEW THIS PAST MONDAY NIGHT SHOULD HAVE DASHED THESE ROSY EXPECTATIONS. LET ME REVIEW WHAT GORBACHEV SAID ABOUT EMIGRATION:

"AS REGARDS THE QUESTION THAT YOU TOUCHED UPON -- THAT IS EXIT, ENTRY -- WELL, I UNDERSTAND THE CONCERN OF THE AMERICAN SIDE TO SOME EXTENT, SINCE THAT IS A NATION THAT WAS FORMED AS A -- LARGELY AS A RESULT OF EMIGRATION PROCESSES. AND THEREFORE OUR VIEWS ARE DIFFERENT."

"BUT YOU KNOW, AS IS THE CASE IN THE UNITED STATES OR IN CANADA, THEY DON'T REALLY WANT TO ALLOW INTO THE UNITED STATES PEOPLE FROM MEXICO OR FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE THE SKILLS THAT ARE REQUIRED. BUT AS SOON AS IN THE 1970'S THERE WAS ESPECIALLY A BIG FLOW OF THOSE WHO WANTED TO EMIGRATE FROM THE SOVIET UNION, THERE WAS ONE HIGHLY PLACED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ADMINISTRATION WHO DECLARED THAT WE'VE RESOLVED THE PROBLEMS OF MATHEMATICIANS BY 50 PERCENT."

"THE UNITED STATES WANTS HERE THROUGH THESE CHANNELS MAKING THIS OUT TO BE -- MAKING THEMSELVES OUT TO BE AN ACTIVE DEFENDER OF THE RIGHTS -- OF HUMAN RIGHTS, TO RESOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS, AND WHAT THEY'RE

ORGANIZING IS A BRAIN DRAIN. AND OF COURSE WE'RE PROTECTING OURSELVES. THAT'S NUMBER ONE. THEN, SECONDLY, WE WILL NEVER ACCEPT A CONDITION WHEN THE PEOPLE ARE BEING EXHORTED FROM OUTSIDE TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY. . . ."

THIS WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY STATEMENT. I QUESTION WHETHER GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV REALLY BELIEVES THAT WE WERE "ORGANIZING A BRAIN DRAIN" OR "EXHORTING FROM OUTSIDE" SOVIET CITIZENS TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY.

WORSE, HIS SUBSEQUENT REMARKS, THOUGH DIRECTED AT FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, RAISED AGAIN THE EXCUSE OF STATE SECURITY AS A LEGITIMATE BASIS FOR DENYING PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE. GORBACHEV SAID, AND I QUOTE:

"FAMILY REUNIFICATION -- WE BELIEVE THAT TO BE A PROBLEM, AND WE SHALL DO OUR BEST TO HAVE THOSE PROBLEMS RESOLVED. . . . I THINK THAT RIGHT NOW WE HAVE AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED PERMISSION ONLY THOSE WHO CANNOT LEAVE BECAUSE OF STATE SECURITY REASONS. THERE ARE NO OTHER REASONS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO ACT IN THAT WAY."

CONSPICUOUSLY, GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV'S STATEMENT IN PARIS THAT ACCESS TO STATE SECRETS WOULD ONLY BE A BARRIER

TO EMIGRATION FOR FIVE YEARS, OR IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES FOR TEN YEARS, HAS NOT BEEN FOLLOWED IN PRACTICE BY SOVIET OFFICIALS. MANY PEOPLE WHO LAST HAD ACCESS TO STATE SECRETS MORE THAN TEN YEARS AGO ARE STILL DENIED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE ON STATE SECURITY GROUNDS.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT THIS ASSERTION OF STATE SECURITY AS A REASONABLE BASIS FOR DENIAL OF PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE. IT IS NEITHER REASONABLE NOR LEGITMATE, BECAUSE SOVIET LAW AND PRACTICE IS CONTRARY TO GENERALLY ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

THE POINT IS THAT UNDER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS FREELY ENTERED INTO BY THE SOVIET UNION, THE RIGHT TO LEAVE ONE'S COUNTRY IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT. UNDER THESE AGREEMENTS, RESTRICTIONS ON THIS RIGHT ARE EXTRAORDINARY AND EXCEPTIONAL IN NATURE AND MAY BE APPLIED ONLY FOR COMPELLING REASONS.

ANY SUCH RESTRICTIONS MUST BE GENERAL AND NON-DISRIMINATORY IN THEIR APPLICATION. ADMINISTRATIVELY IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS MUST BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW -- AND TO REVERSAL IF THEY WERE UNREASONABLE OR ARBITRARY. LASTLY, ANY RESTRICTION ON THE BASIS OF NATIONAL SECURITY MUST DEMONSTRATE A REAL AND ACTUAL DANGER TO THE SECURITY OF THE STATE.

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LET ME SAY AGAIN, SOVIET LAW AND SOVIET PRACTICE DO NOT MEET THESE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS. ONE CASE IN PARTICULAR, THAT OF BENJAMIN CHARNY, COMES TO MIND. HE IS ONE OF THE FIVE ORIGINAL BILATERAL FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES IN WHICH THE SOVIET MEMBER WAS ALSO A CANCER VICTIM.

BENJAMIN CHARNY HAS BEEN DENIED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE ON STATE SECURITY GROUNDS. YET, HE LAST WORKED ON ANYTHING EVEN REMOTELY SENSITIVE IN THE LATE 1960'S. THIS IS FAR BEYOND THE TEN-YEAR LIMIT GROBACHEV STATED WOULD BE APPLIED ONLY IN EXTRAORDINARY CASES. AND BENJAMIN IS DYING OF CANCER.

THE SOVIETS ARE FOLLOWING THE HISTORIC RUSSIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD EMIGRANTS. THEY REGARD THEM AS TRAITORS TO THE MOTHERLAND. THIS VIEW IS INTENSIFIED BY THE FACT THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS TOLD ITS PEOPLE FOR DECADES THAT IT IS THE "WORKER'S PARADISE," THE BEST PLACE IN THE WORLD FOR THE AVERAGE PERSON TO LEAVE. THIS MAKES IT DOUBLY DAMNING TO ATTEMPT TO LEAVE.

AS GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV ATTEMPTS TO WORK THE MAGIC OF GLASNOST ON THE CITIZENS OF AMERICA, WE HAVE TO KEEP IN MIND THAT BASIC CONDITIONS HAVE NOT IMPROVED FOR THE AVERAGE SOVIET CITIZEN. THE KGB IS NO LONGER ARRESTING AND

SHIPPING OFF TO PRISONS, LABOR CAMPS, OR PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS EVERYONE WHO VOICES A DISSENTING OPINION. BUT THERE ARE STILL IRON LIMITS TO DISSENT. AND PEOPLE WHO TEST THOSE LIMITS TASTE THE IRON.

WE MUST RETAIN THE WISDOM TO REALIZE THAT THE STRUGGLE IS NOT OVER JUST BECAUSE GORBACHEV IS HERE TO TALK ARMS CONTROL OR BECAUSE SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE ALLOWED MOST OF THE BETTER-KNOWN REFUSENIKS AND DISSIDENTS TO LEAVE THE U.S.S.R. WE MUST FIGHT ON FOR REAL COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROMISES THE SOVIETS MADE WHEN THEY SIGNED THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

AT THE VIENNA REVIEW MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER NATIONS HAVE MADE A CLEAR RECORD OF SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF THEIR COMMITMENTS IN EVERY AREA OF THE ACCORDS. THE VIOLATIONS HAVE NOT STOPPED AND THE ABUSERS HAVE NOT BEEN BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.

WE CANNOT RELAX AND SURRENDER TO A BURST OF GOOD FEELING BASED UPON GORBACHEV'S SMILE. WE HAVE TO RECALL THE STEEL TEETH BEHIND THE SMILE AND KEEP WORKING FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THOSE WHO STILL FEEL THE BITE OF THOSE TEETH.

I PLEDGE MY CONTINUED DEDICATION TO THIS GREAT AND GOOD CAUSE. MY COLLEAGUES AND I WILL NOT SLACKEN IN OUR EFFORTS UNTIL THE SOVIETS ACTUALLY KEEP THE PROMISES THEY MADE.

THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator.

Next, the cochairman of the Human Rights Caucus in the House of Representatives, one of our most able and effective Members, Congressman Lantos from California.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TOM LANTOS FROM CALIFORNIA

Representative LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to salute these men and women of courage. I would like to salute your leadership and that of Senator DeConcini. And as a Democrat, I would like to salute the leadership that Secretary Shultz has given to the human rights movement.

It is tempting, Mr. Chairman, to speak of symbols, but knowing these men and women before us today, it is clear that they are more than symbols. There is a lot of substance here, and not the way that Mr. Gorbachev meant it. There is, in fact, a "brain drain" which is quite obvious if you talk to them.

I would like to make just one point. We will not go away. The cause of human rights will remain a top concern of the Congress of the United States until every individual who wishes to practice his religion in his own way will be allowed to do so. The Congress of the United States will not go away until every individual who is entitled by the Helsinki accords to leave, is able to leave.

Beyond the question of Soviet Jewry, Mr. Chairman, it is important for us, on this very historic morning, to remember that human rights are indivisible; that human rights are our concern not just vis-a-vis Soviet Jews, but also the suppressed people of Tibet, the persecuted Ba'Hai in Iran, all Christians, all Jews, men and women of all faith wherever they are suppressed.

The secret of the success of the summit between Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev can be measured by only one significant yardstick: What kind of headway are they going to make in the field of human rights?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Next I would like to call on Senator Frank Lautenberg from the State of New Jersey, also one of our most active members of the Commission.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANK LAUTENBERG

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and my compliments also to you for assembling this group of witnesses and the committee that you have led with the degree of significant inspiration. It has helped us in this cause.

Seeing all of these people here today makes me happy and encouraged. The last time that I saw Ida Nudel and Lev Elbert was in Moscow in early September. Now, I will not take credit, but a few days after I was there, you were given permission to leave, and I was happy to have seen you before that wonderful announcement day.

I also saw the Slepaks at that time and hope that we will see them here soon this morning.

Now you are living in freedom, and you have not given up the struggle. I urge you not to give up the struggle, because you encourage people all around this free world to believe that one day your brethren, our brethren will be set free.

In Congress and throughout the Nation we are continuing the struggle for Soviet Jewry. While I and my colleagues welcome the Soviets long-overdue decision to permit well-known refuseniks like you to emigrate, we are not going to be satisfied until everyone who wants to emigrate has the opportunity to do so.

The Soviet record on emigration is undeniably improving. In 1987, some 7,200 Jews have been permitted to leave. That is impressive, especially when compared to the 914 Jews who were permitted to emigrate last year.

But in 1979, I was the president of the United Jewish Appeal in America, and that year more than 50,000 Jews were permitted to leave the Soviet Union. We are not going to be satisfied until we see numbers exceeding that again.

The Soviets continue to use the excuse of state secrets as a reason for preventing Jews from being reunited with their families in the West. Secrets? The only secrets that we and refuseniks know, is that when the pressure is on, things happen. That is what we have to continue to do, and led by the inspiration of our friends here, I see it happening.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to be here.

Chairman HOYER. Next, from the State of New York, Congressman Jim Scheuer. Jim Scheuer and I had an opportunity of being in Moscow in April together, and we are very pleased particularly to see a number of people here whom we had the opportunity to meet then.

Congressman Scheuer.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JAMES H. SCHEUER FROM NEW YORK

Representative SCHEUER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and it is a great joy for me to see many of my old friends dating back to my visits to Moscow in 1972 and 1980 and again last April as you pointed out. It is a source of indescribable joy for me to see you all here today.

But we are only at the tip of the iceberg. There remains a great and important job for us to do.

I would like to pay tribute to the distinguished leadership of this committee, the Helsinki Commission, to our great, marvelous Secretary of State, to this administration for having been unrelenting and unyielding in its pressure for human rights, and I, frankly, would like to pay tribute to my colleagues in Congress.

This is not a Jewish cause. As you can see by the makeup of the Helsinki Commission and the people here and the Members of both the House and the Senate, it is not a Jewish cause; it is not a Democratic cause. It is a cause of elected officials across the length and breadth of this country at every single level.

And I am proud of my colleagues for having stood up and been counted not on a Jewish issue alone, but on an issue of decency, on an issue of commitment to the standards of the Judeo-Christian

ethic, to which we wish to hold our Russian colleagues as they enter the community of civilized nations.

I hope in the next couple of days, Mr. Chairman, as Members of Congress, Ambassador Schifter and others, meet with Mr. Gorbachev, they will ask him the question: How do you expect us to trust you on security issues involving disarmament that go to the central nervous system of your security concerns, when it has been perfectly clear beyond a shadow of doubt that we cannot trust you on emigration matters and human rights issues that have nothing to do with security whatsoever? How do you expect us to trust you when day-by-day, hour-by-hour you define the nature and quality of the Soviet state by using the instruments of government to degrade, to demean, and to intimidate your citizens? How do you expect that trust to be created under those conditions?

We hope that Mr. Gorbachev in conversations with our State Department and with the Members of the House and Senate, will begin to get some understanding that the Soviet Union must respect its freely assumed international, legal obligations.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Congressman Scheuer.

Next I would like to introduce Congressman Miller. Are you in the Senate now, John?

Representative MILLER. I just realized that I seem to have ended up on the wrong side.

Chairman HOYER. No, that is all right. Cochairman DeConcini said that Congressman Miller was on the right side.

I would like to introduce Congressman Miller. Although not a member of the Helsinki Commission, he has been very active in this cause and with the Commission.

Congressman Miller.

BRIEF COMMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JOHN R. MILLER FROM WASHINGTON

Representative MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think my colleagues have already outlined most of the points that I wanted to make. So I would just like to thank the members of this panel for coming to give us advice.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Miller.

Next I would like to introduce one of the senior members of the Helsinki Commission, also chairman of one of the major subcommittees of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congressman Ed Markey from Massachusetts.

Congressman Markey.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD J. MARKEY

Representative MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to compliment you on this very timely and important hearing. Like many Americans I watched General Secretary Gorbachev's interview on television Monday night. The opportunity for the American people to hear first hand from the leader of the Soviet Union is very important, but many of the words which I heard the General Secretary speak were deeply troubling to me.

As the head of the Soviet Government, Mikhail Gorbachev knows the complete truth about his country's emigration and human rights policies, but he did not tell it during his interview. The chief architect of the policy of openness in the Soviet Union displayed an appalling lack of "glasnost" with his American audience.

Gorbachev asserted, for example, that everyone who wants to emigrate from the Soviet Union has received permission to do so, with the exception of those denied on the basis of state security, but he did not explain that state security has become the catch-all excuse for denying permission to those who want to leave, and thousands upon thousands remain.

Nor did Gorbachev explain why Soviet intellectuals who seek to emigrate are often fired from their jobs and forced to work as plumbers and custodians. How does that square with the assertion that the United States has organized a "brain drain" on the Soviet Union?

I welcome this hearing to provide us, to borrow a phrase, some "perestroika," some restructuring of Mikhail Gorbachev's explanations, so that the truth about Soviet emigration policy is made known to the American people and to the world.

We have before us a panel of guests who are most qualified to help us learn the truth about the emigration question. They know because they have lived it. All of our witnesses have spent much of their lives seeking only to emigrate from the Soviet Union, and they paid a high price for attempting to exercise this basic human right.

At the hands of the Soviet Government, they spent years separated from their loved ones. They were subjected to arbitrary imprisonment and abuse, and they were denied the right to practice their religious beliefs. Their lives and the lives of thousands of other Soviet Jews are testimony enough to the emptiness of Mikhail Gorbachev's words.

The Commission recognizes your efforts and applauds all that you have done for the plight of Soviet Jews and others, and I look forward to hearing from you today so that we can set the record straight.

And I once again, Mr. Chairman, want to compliment you on the timeliness of this very, very important hearing.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Markey.

I would like to recognize another member of the Commission, the ranking Republican member of the Energy Committee and one of the ranking members of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Jim McClure from Idaho.

Senator McClure.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES McCLURE

Senator MCCLURE. Mr. Chairman, I want to welcome our witnesses here today and give them a particular salute for the symbol that you have become and the work that you have done to highlight the issues that do separate us from bettering relations between ourselves and the Soviet Union.

I think every one of us recognizes that we are in a dangerous world, and that we live in that world with the Soviet Union, and there are a whole range of issues we need to discuss and I appreciate, Congressman, the words that were spoken a few moments ago saluting this administration for its firm stand on human rights. I salute you and commend you for having done so here today on the eve of the visit of the General Secretary to this country, to highlight one of the most dramatic reasons why we are suspicious of the true meaning of "glasnost."

It is words that are easy to utter and deeds that really matter, whether by this committee or members of it or people in this administration or, indeed, on the part of the General Secretary and the leadership of the Soviet Union.

If, indeed, Mr. General Secretary wants to have better relations with this country, let him perform some deeds that justify those better relations. If he really believes that we can be so easily fooled by words alone, let this hearing tell him that, indeed, it will take performance on his part to convince the American public that there has been a fundamental change in the Soviet Union.

If he wants better relationships with the United States, let him tear down the Berlin Wall. Let them begin to give some freedom to their people. Perhaps also he might tear down the Krasnoyarsk radar and begin to come into compliance with the ABM Treaty.

There are a number of deeds that could be performed, and I think that is exactly the meaning of this meeting here today, that we want more than just words.

And, again, I want to welcome the witnesses who have by their deeds mobilized world opinion. We are in the midst of a period of relaxed tensions, and one of the victims of that relaxation of tensions might well be the Jackson-Vanik amendment. I want to reaffirm my support for that amendment and that policy which it expresses. I hope we do not lose sight of the fact that it is our actions that bring about results.

But there is not anyone in the world who understands that better than the witnesses before us, and no one who exemplifies it better than each of you here.

Thank you very much for your words, your actions and your presence.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator McClure.

Next I would like to recognize Congressman Mel Levine from California, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and one of the most active members of that committee in this area.

. Congressman Levine.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE MEL LEVINE FROM CALIFORNIA

Representative LEVINE. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and I want to join with my colleagues in commending you and Cochairman DeConcini in the marvelous work that you have both been doing on this issue and in convening this extremely important and timely hearing.

I also want to join with my colleagues who have commended Secretary of State Shultz for the extremely important work he has

been doing on this issue and for the commitment he has shown to Soviet Jewry during his tenure as Secretary of State.

Mr. Chairman, on the one hand, this is truly an inspirational and extraordinary occurrence. Several months ago, I would never have believed that we would possibly have been able to hear personally, in Washington, from the people who are here today. To have Natan Sharansky, Ida Nudel, Yuli Edelshtein and the others before us here in Washington is truly remarkable and inspirational. You and your colleagues—and I think we all are convinced of this—exemplify human dignity and human courage. All of us owe you an incredible debt of thanks for the courage and the dignity you have shown throughout the years of suffering, and the years you have resisted and led efforts not only for yourselves, but for all of your co-religionists and people of other faiths in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, however, while we are inspired by your presence, testifying before us today, you should also know that relations between our country and the Soviet Union will never be truly normal as long as the Soviet Jews and others who wish to emigrate are not able to do so.

Like my friend, Mr. Markey, I was very troubled by what Mr. Gorbachev had to say to the American people the other night. I would appreciate hearing from the witnesses, among other things, their views on two of the points that Mr. Gorbachev made in his remarks.

First, Mr. Gorbachev's reference to Soviet law. I would be interested in knowing your view as to whether you felt Mr. Gorbachev was referring in his statement to the first-degree relative law. When he emphasized the need to continue to adhere to Soviet legal standards and Soviet law, was he trying to signal both to people in your prior country and to people here that he is still focused on the first-degree relative law? If, in fact, that was his reference, what does that signify with regard to this issue?

Second, I would be very interested in your thoughts regarding his reference to the "brain drain." What did that tell the American people and the people in the Soviet Union and around the world about Mr. Gorbachev's view regarding the underpinnings of the issue of emigration?

I am looking forward to hearing from you. I want to compliment you on surviving all that you have been through and tell you what an inspiration it is to have you here. At the same time I want to emphasize to you how we will not be silent and we will not rest until the others are allowed to emigrate from the Soviet Union.

Thank you, again, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Congressman Levine.

Next I would like to introduce a member of the Commission. As most of you know this Commission is composed of Members of the U.S. Senate, Members of the House of Representatives, and representatives of the executive department of government. It is appropriate to note, as a number of members of the Commission have pointed out, that human rights is clearly not a partisan issue. There are no Republicans and no Democrats, no Liberals and no Conservatives on this issue. It is an issue on which the Congress and the administration are united.

The administration's principal spokesman in the area of human rights is a member of our Commission, representing the State Department, and an old and good friend of mine, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Schifter.

Secretary Schifter.

BRIEF COMMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE RICHARD SCHIFTER

Secretary SCHIFTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the administration, let me say, first of all, that we certainly are committed to the very same principles that have been stated by you and all your colleagues this morning.

I also want to say that I will convey to Secretary Shultz the very kind comments that have been made concerning him. They are, indeed, well deserved. Let me simply say that I have seen the Secretary both in private conversation and in public statements emphasize and re-emphasize that while we appreciate every single person that has been released from the Soviet Union, we are not going to rest until all of those who want to leave have been given the opportunity to leave.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Last on our list of Members is a member of the Commission, recently elected to the U.S. Senate from the State of Georgia, Senator Wyche Fowler.

Senator Fowler.

BRIEF COMMENT OF SENATOR WYCHE FOWLER

Senator FOWLER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I will be uncharacteristically brief on behalf of all my colleagues.

Mr. Sharansky, this is a glorious morning. The last time that I was in this room, the very last time that I was in this room, I was sitting where you are sitting, with Chairman Hoyer, with your wife, Avitol, pleading for your release.

It was 16 years ago on Soviet soil that Mr. Spencer Oliver, the chief counsel of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, and I, at Babayar, pleaded and fortunately obtained the release of Yakov Gluzman in 1971.

When I see the faces at this table today, after 16 years and even longer in your struggle, all I can say is that we are getting there. We are not there yet, but we are getting there.

And all of us, as you have heard this morning, pledge with you the continuation until all are free who seek to be free.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator.

We took about 30 minutes to get through 6 Senators, 8 Members of the House, and one Assistant Secretary of State. By any comparison, that was quick.

Before we get to those whom we have really come to hear, there are others in the room who could give equally compelling testimony, and I want to introduce them and just ask them to stand. Some are very happy today because they have received good news recently. Some are still waiting for good news, and in the concept of not forgetting, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce them.

First of all, I want to introduce Mikhail and Oksana (Ilana) Kholmiansky. Mikhail is the brother of Alexander who yesterday received permission [applause]. Next I would like to introduce Felix Abramovich, son of Pavel Abramovich, who has been informed that permission to emigrate has been granted [applause]. Anna and Leon Charney, the daughter and brother of Benjamin Charney [applause]. Their father has not received permission.

Next, Igor Tufeld, the son of Vladimir and Isolde Tufeld [applause]. They, too, wait on permission.

Simon Shnirman, another former prisoner, who was able to join us today [applause]. Irena Dashevsky, daughter of Vladimir Dashevsky, who waits for approval [applause]. And Marina Ratner, sister of Judith Ratner-Bialy [applause]. We welcome all of them here.

And now I would like to turn to our witnesses. Many of us know personally some of these witnesses. But for perhaps members of the American public who do not know some of these witnesses, these are courageous people who represent the very best in humanity, and we are, indeed, privileged and proud to have them here.

We have divided our witnesses into three panels which will focus on three very timely topics: issues of Jewish culture, state secrecy and how it affects emigration, and, last, the prospects for the summit both here and in the Soviet Union.

We will first recognize all of the witnesses, and once all three panels are done, questions from Commission members will then be asked. The reason for that is we want to make sure that everybody gets the opportunity who is here to testify fully.

In the interest of time, I would ask each of you to limit your statements to 5 minutes, or in that vicinity.

The first panel is composed of two people who have been imprisoned and who have shown great courage. Ida Nudel has been called the "guardian angel" of the refusenik movement. Born in 1931, and I apologize for that being in there, she first applied to emigrate in 1971. She was refused permission on the grounds of being exposed to state secrets while working as an economist.

Despite numerous arrests, detentions and brutal treatment, she clung to her goal of emigrating to Israel to be with her sister, Elena, who has visited many of us in this country.

In 1978, she hung a banner from her apartment which read, "KGB, give me a visa to Israel." For that, she was sentenced to 4 years in internal exile.

After her exile, she returned to Moscow and continued her struggle not merely for herself, but for thousands and thousands of others.

Ida's dream finally came true when she and her best friend, her dog, arrived in Israel on October 26.

With Ida Nudel is Yuli Edelshtein. Yuli taught Hebrew while in the Soviet Union, which did not bode well with Soviet authorities because he was arrested in his apartment on September 4, 1984. The Soviet authorities claimed to have found drugs in his apartment. He was charged with possessing illegal drugs and subsequently sentenced to 3 years in a labor camp, where he was subjected to frequent beatings by his fellow prisoners.

He was released from prison 5 months early and soon received permission to emigrate. He and his wife, Tanya, arrived in Israel in July.

I might add proudly that my congregation, Broadview Baptist Church and the Shaare Tikvah Synagogue in Temple Hills, Maryland co-adopted Yuli. I think this is symbolic of the inter-denominational concern which has been spoken of by Congressman Lantos and others.

We are extremely honored to have with us today these two witnesses, and I now would like to recognize proudly Ida Nudel [applause].

STATEMENT OF IDA NUDEL

Ms. NUDEL. Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, I am very thankful to all of you for this invitation to present testimony on behalf of thousands and thousands of Jews and non-Jews who are fighting for their freedom and who are suffering from their fight.

First of all, I would like to tell all of you that the U.S. Government, President Reagan, Secretary of State Shultz, and all the Members of the Senate and Congress, that I am personally very thankful for the freedom you obtained for me. Even more, you saved my life.

Now is a very important moment in the history of humanity. This summit meeting may turn relations between two powerful countries in any direction, for good or for worse, and in this case, I think the more sensitive and more important point is to relieve tension between two countries, to stand on human rights principles and the dignity of man.

This sensitive point will clearly show the intensions of the Soviet Government, and how deeply they decide to follow deliberately signed documents about human rights, such as the Helsinki accords.

And I ask all of you not to believe in the very beautiful and nice words Mr. Gorbachev is speaking now. All his words must be supported by deeds.

These last weeks the Soviets have shown what may be considered as a sign that they want to respect human rights, but I think it is a present to you. The people who you have mentioned already who have received permission to leave, all of us sitting here before you, we were given as a present, exotic things to please you and to make you believe in the Soviet Government's sincerity.

But I think a present is not a deed. A present is a present, and to show their sincere attention on human rights, they need to open the gates and let those who fight for freedom, who dream about freedom, be free.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

Yuli Edelshtein.

STATEMENT OF YULI EDELSHTEIN

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, I am really honored to testify in front of this Commission, and I

would really like to speak about what we probably can call the revival of the Jewish culture in the U.S.S.R. and how the new policy of "glasnost" influences this revival.

During the last 15 to 20 years, we have all been witnesses to the fact that many young Jews, having absolutely no Jewish background, who were being deprived of any Jewish education in any form, are all of a sudden looking for their roots and studying their tradition. This movement has certainly been an indivisible part of the movement for emigration to Israel, but people detained in the U.S.S.R. and deprived of their right to emigrate for 15 or 20 years has produced thousands of people who were able to speak fluent Hebrew and hundreds of people involved in studying their tradition, hundreds of people who have become observant Jews and participated in the Jewish religious movement.

And to my mind, we must clearly understand what is happening with this movement nowadays in the U.S.S.R. Let's start with Hebrew. We all know that many of us former Hebrew teachers in Moscow were released from labor camps and some of them even granted visas to emigrate to Israel, but I would like to share with you my experience. I will be very brief.

The last phrase I heard in my labor camp from the officer who was in charge of my release was,

> Edelshtein, I want you to remember one thing. You are still a criminal. You are still a drug addict. No one has acquitted you, and any moment we expect you back to our camp.

So I would like you to understand that when I am thinking of some prisoner releases, like say Ari Volvovsky, a Hebrew teacher released from the camp but not granted an exit visa; I always remember this phrase: "any moment they expect them back to their camps."

As far as Torah studying is concerned, none of the teachers—by the way, it is also true about the Hebrew teachers are recognized as an official teacher. None of them has any permission to teach what he teaches, and they are all due for persecution and harassment. The examples are known to all of us. Mr. Chairman introduced the daughter and son-in-law of Vladimir Dashevsky, who is one of the most prominant Torah teachers in Moscow and the teacher of Jewish tradition and religion. He is harassed and persecuted all the time, and simply cannot lead a normal, human life, let alone being deprived of his desire to emigrate to Israel.

We now sometimes hear stories and read them in the American press about some improvement in this field in the U.S.S.R. I would like to tell you that unfortunately not all of these stories are true. What we read about, the special Jewish kosher restaurant in Moscow, I am unhappy to inform you, is that this restaurant exists only on the page of the New York Times. It has never existed in Moscow.

As far as more openness, we enjoy probably better conditions for American and other tourists in their travel to the U.S.S.R., but I would like to mention one small point. When these tourists pass through customs in the U.S.S.R., the attitude toward them is very polite, is perfect. But, when Hebrew teaching materials, religious

materials about Jewish religion is found, it is confiscated on the spot.

So I do believe that certainly none of us has any doubt that, first of all, we are talking about free emigration to Israel for Soviet Jews, their possibility to emigrate without being victims of persecution, without becoming professional invalids, without endangering their children and families, but we must not forget that there is an indivisible part, as I have already said, of this movement for emigration which provides Jewish people, the new generation of the Jewish people in Russia, with some basic Jewish culture, and to my mind, these activists of the Aliyah movement are in a most desperate situation and are the first victims, God forbid, of the new persecution and repression, if it follows.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

It is 10:45 and, Lev and Inna, I am going to switch the panels, if that is all right, because the Slepaks have not yet arrived. Inna, we are going to move you up to the table pretty soon, as well.

We are going to go to the third panel first, and then we will come back to you, Lev.

The third panel will examine the upcoming summit and the hopes this summit holds for Jews, both here and in the Soviet Union.

Our witnesses are Natan Sharansky and Josif Mendelevitch.

Natan Sharansky, as we all know, spent 8 years in Soviet prison on trumped-up spy charges. His wife, Avitol, during his incarceration, rallied on his behalf throughout the world, and herself became a leading and most eloquent spokeswoman on behalf of human rights.

Senator Fowler mentioned that Avitol Sharansky, Senator Fowler and I had the opportunity of testifying at that table at a hearing on human rights.

The world was overjoyed when, on February 11 of last year, Natan crossed the Glenicke Bridge in Berlin to become a free man. His activism grows every day as he continues the fight for those left behind.

I might say that I do not know when he has gotten any sleep during his most recent visit to the United States because he has been traveling all over the country and has spoken in 25 different communities over the last 2 weeks, bringing his experience and issuing his plea.

Josif Mendelevitch is a former prisoner who was arrested in 1970 for conspiring to seize an aircraft in Leningrad and divert it to Sweden. He was sentenced to 12 years in a strict regime camp.

In an unexpected development, he was released from regime camp in February 1981 and flew to Vienna and then Israel. Since his arrival in Israel, he has remained active in the refusenik movement, as president of the Soviet Jewry Information Center, and is in daily contact with those left behind in the Soviet Union who still yearn for their freedom.

These two gentlemen can give compelling perspectives as we move into the summit negotiations next week in an atmosphere of expectation and of hope. They will leven that expectation and hope

with the realism and personal experiences that they bring to their testimony.

Natan Sharansky.

STATEMENT OF NATAN SHARANSKY

Mr. SHARANSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Each time when I have an opportunity to continue our successful criminal collaboration with Senators and Congressmen which we so successfully started many years ago in Moscow in organizing our Helsinki group, and you here, your Helsinki group, I feel special affection, remembering how angry the KGB was for this collaboration. I do hope that there will be one more contribution to the cause, one of the most noble causes for all times, the struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union and for Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, and for the right of Jews to be Jews.

In some days, the Soviet leader is coming to the United States of America, and he is really a new type of Soviet leader. He is new not because he is concerned about human rights, as many people think; not because he desires to change the Soviet system to a kind of Western democracy. Those who listened to his last interview, not only saw him on TV but really listened to what he said probably have no illusions.

He quite clearly explained that he is the party-loyal ruler of that system, and he is not going to change it, and he is not going to give his people human rights, and "glasnost" does not mean freedom of speech. "Glasnost" only means that people are permitted to say some things, which leaders decide what kind of things.

This ruler is coming to the United States of America, but nevertheless, we have to accept this new type of course. He is a realist. He is a realist because he looks at the Soviet economy and Soviet system and says that it is in trouble. He is the first leader who openly said to the Soviet people that if he would not succeed in improving this system quickly, we can lose in our competition with the West.

He is trying to find ways for improvement. He talks of making internal reforms, which is only talk, and he tries to open the gates to the West, for Western technology, trade, and credits to the Soviet Union. He tries to involve the West in that type of collaboration which will permit him to close the technological gap which exists between the Western and Eastern civilization.

Understanding this, he must change his image. He recognizes the power of the human rights issue for this, and he is making one or another very nice, but very limited, almost cosmetic changes.

For each of us, the fact that we are free and not in Soviet prison is not cosmetic, but for our whole movement, for our whole struggle which from the very beginning was a struggle for the right of all the people to join our people in freedom in Israel, for the right of Jews to be Jews, this is really cosmetic.

While many famous refuseniks are released, for the Jew today in the Soviet Union to go through all of the forces of application sometimes is even more difficult. Thanks to this new law which limits the rights to apply only to those who have fellow relatives in the West; thanks to this, using a "Catch-22" so-called security risk

which is applied to people who never had it or who had it 15 or 20 years ago.

As we all expected, there were some new presents yesterday by the Soviet Government in view of the summit. We heard about some other names who were released. But what about Natasha Khassina who for 14 years is already struggling for her right to leave, or what about Yuli Kosharovsky, who is doing it for 16 years? What about the parents of Igor Tufeld whose mother is dying of cancer, and they say that there is a security risk and at the same time we see a paper from Zion organizations who are told they do not permit him to leave? They say, "No, you have no security. You cannot leave."

We all hope they will be soon released, but again, it will be done as a nice gesture, as a nice present, as Ida Nudel said earlier.

What we really demand, is the changing of all of the attitudes of the Soviet Government, accepting the right of Jews to be part of their people, accepting the right of free emigration exactly as it said in the Declaration of Human Rights that everybody has the right to leave his country where he lives.

So no doubt this question will be raised during the summit. We know from President Reagan; we know from Secretary of State Shultz; we know from all the advisors of the White House and State Department and from our friends in the Senate and Congress that this question will be raised as one of the first.

But the important thing is whether Gorbachev will treat this question as simply lipservice, as a ceremonial thing which Americans have to do, or if he will treat it seriously, as quite a clear message that without solving this problem, he cannot reach his aims in the West.

It depends on whether he will see that behind this position of the American administration, that behind those words there is a very firm position of the American Congress, there is a very firm position of the American people who view it as their own issue, who view it as an American issue.

I have now been in many communities, in small and big communities. I saw a lot of enthusiasm by Jews and non-Jews. I understand how historical this moment is. They want to participate in history. They want to come to Washington and to make Gorbachev hear their voice. Already airplanes in America are already rented on Sunday, and airplanes in Canada are already rented on Sunday. So if any of you still do not have your ticket, please hurry to buy it or, better, stay in Washington.

I know that President Reagan when he was in Geneva—I know it from him—said to Gorbachev in 1985 that:

> You can continue saying that Sharansky is a spy, but my people listen to his wife, and they believe her, and you will not succeed in changing your image until you release him.

Gorbachev took it seriously because he saw that the realistic position of American politicians is the position of the American people. I hope that this time when Gorbachev comes that President Reagan will say to him that whatever you say about Soviet Jews, about Soviet emigration, about human rights, there are now people who want to leave. My people do know that there are hundreds of

thousands of Jews who want to leave. They do know that there are millions of Jews who are victims of forced assimilation, and you will not be able to change your image; you will not be able to reach your aims until you solve these problems.

And what I really want is for Gorbachev to take these words as seriously as he took the words of Reagan in Geneva.

It depends on each of you; it depends on each of us.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much. And now Mr. Mendelevitch.

STATEMENT OF JOSIF MENDELEVITCH

Mr. MENDELEVITCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Soviet Jewry Education and Information Center was established 4 years ago as a principal organization, I would say the first organization of Soviet Jews for Soviet Jews to get all other prisoners released, and we stay in everyday contact with our friends.

Instead of giving my statement, I would rather bring to your attention a statement that we got today from Moscow. As you know, our activist friends in Moscow will start a hunger strike and manifestation on December 6 at the Soviet Foreign Office, and here is a letter signed by approximately 70 members. I will just cite some sentences of the statement. Later it will be translated into English and you will be able to read it.

The statement says that the hopes of changes are vanishing among the activists. There is a certain tendency to lay down the emigration process.

The KGB, militia, and the police, started their tactics of persecution, when there were peace demonstrations on November 24 in front of OVIR on behalf of the family Kalchinsky, that all of the members of the manifestation were severely beaten, and five of the participants were arrested. They got a new generation of Prisoners of Zion, some of them sentenced to 10 or 15 days of imprisonment.

The statement says that there is no doubt that the KGB and the authorities are taking these tactics with an aim to slow the process of emigration, and as the goals fall apart, they claim that they should completely eliminate the demand to bring an invitation of close relatives, which is illegal to all international laws that the Soviets are a part of; that there should be formulated the final term for the refusal on state secrecy basis. There should be no permission demanded from the relatives that stay in Soviet Russia.

Mr. Chairman, I draw your attention specifically to the way the Soviets treated the peaceful demonstrations of Soviet Jews. Only maybe one-half year ago there were demonstrations that the Soviets had to accept. Now they took another approach.

The most important point is the anti-Semitism of the Soviet Government that is revealed in a lot of publications and on TV, the press, in every source, and specifically among people in industry. We feel that the Soviets are ready to react to the demands of the West, and specifically of the American Government, but there will be no positive changes in the Soviet attitude until the American Government and all of the Soviet Jews use real tools and not only words and hopes to change the situation.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Mendelevitch.

We are now going to recognize our next panelists. If I could ask our first witnesses to move over one chair so Inna could join Lev?

The Slepaks have still not arrived. They are coming from Milwaukee. Apparently the plane was delayed, and we hope that they are here prior to the end of our hearing.

Lev and Inna Elbert are persons known to me because I had the opportunity of visiting them in their apartment in Moscow this past April, and their son, at a time of commitment, a hunger strike. I am very pleased that both of them are here.

They first applied to emigrate in 1976, 11 years ago, but were denied because of access to classified information.

Now, Lev Elbert had the opportunity to give to me a letter that he had received from the deputy commander of his unit with whom he had been associated in the armed services. Lev Elbert's rank was analogous to a private, I suppose. He was involved in the very technical and highly sensitive security job of building a swimming pool. If that sounds ironic to you, it is.

He was in the service for 11 months, 1 month of which he was either on vacation or visiting family. The deputy commander of his unit stated in 1983 that Lev Elbert was not a security risk.

I gave that letter to Mr. Dobrynin in April of this year. Many others had also visited Lev.

Lev, Inna and their son brought attention to their plight by a hunger strike. That obviously angered the Soviets, but it did accomplish the objective. The Elberts, notwithstanding tremendous official pressure, did not deter from maintaining their activism. Their steadfast courage finally paid off.

Less than 1 month ago they arrived in Israel. I might add that Congressman Scheuer was with me, as was Congressman Larry Coughlin of Pennsylvania who could not be here today, but asked me to express his best to you.

That hunger strike was in excess of 50 days, when you and I were there, Jim.

Representative SCHEUER. May I just say one sentence?

I'm so happy to see you, Lev and Inna. When I came in this morning and sat down and scanned the table, I saw you, and I never connected you with the poor, emaciated, shriveled up, waiflike character that I met in April of this year. It is great to see what the nourishment of freedom and some good food can do for a human being.

Chairman HOYER. Secretary Schifter.

Secretary SCHIFTER. I just wanted to echo that statement because I, too, simply did not recognize you when I came in until I saw the nameplate. You certainly have changed since I last saw you. Great.

Chairman HOYER. It is important that the American public know, and that is one of the reasons for this hearing. All Lev, Inna and their child wanted to do was to go to Israel to live.

Indeed, there was an attempt to even trump up charges that did not fly.

We are very pleased to have you here. We are interested in the message that you bring, and we look forward to hearing from both of you now. Lev and Inna Elbert.

STATEMENT OF LEV AND INNA ELBERT

Mr. ELBERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, the distinguished panel.

First of all, it is the first time that I am giving testimony sitting.

Chairman HOYER. Why don't you tell everybody the significance of that?

Mr. ELBERT. Yes. Well, because the last time I had been testifying was when I had been convicted.

Chairman HOYER. You were in the dock, in effect, standing.

Mr. ELBERT. I was in the dock, yes.

Mr. Chairman, the distinguished panel, ladies and gentlemen, it has fallen to my lot a rewarding but a highly emotionally charged task, first of all, to thank all of you for the efforts and the activity which has been invested in the case of releasing our family from the Soviet Union.

I would not presume to give the correct analysis of what is going on inside the screen of "glasnost." The only thing I would like to tell is my personal experience and also some observations I had made while being in the Soviet Union.

The matter is, that according to the definition in the dictionary of the Russian language, "glasnost" does not mean only openness, but the first meaning is publicity, and to a certain extent this first meaning of this word has proved to be good and has proved to be quite correct according to the cause of the Jewish repatriation from the Soviet Union to Israel.

All of us here whom you have been hailing as an example of the fruition of a 16-year-old effort are like a handful of those who are left behind. According to the statistics, there are 1,700 people who have been refused in excess of 10 years back in the U.S.S.R. There are perhaps hundreds more whom you do not know, whom we do not know because they are not visible. Not all of them are there to raise their head, to voice their name, and to be recognized.

Also, I would like to mention that the approximate, perhaps rough estimate of the total amount of people, of the refuseniks, in the U.S.S.R. is in the vicinity of 50,000 people.

The only law which governs the process of emigration and immigration from the Soviet Union is the covenant of political and human rights which has been ratified by the Soviets because there is no internal law which is governing this process.

All of you are perhaps familiar with clause 12, article III of this covenant, which especially enumerates the reasons for refusal under which the Soviets or any other country party to this covenant are able to refuse people their legitimate right to leave the country of their origin or to enter it back.

One of them is the security reason, and the Soviets have been quite generous in imposing this security regulation on the people, on the Jews, and on Jews who are willing to leave the Soviet Union. One of the reasons why this provision has been enacted by them is; first of all, because they refuse to cooperate on this issue with any external party, and then it is a very plausible excuse in the eyes of any public opinion in any country.

The only thing I would like to add now is that Mr. Gorbachev in his last interview with Tom Brokaw has brazenly, I would call it,

stated the real means and goals of the Soviet Union, which is forcibly prevent, as he put it, the "brain drain," which in the long run waters down to the simple fact that this state will arbitrarily prevent any individual whom it will think is needed for the state's interest to leave the Soviet Union.

When Mr. Gorbachev comes to Washington and you will have the possibility—I would not call it the honor to meet him, I would hope that you would convey the message which has been so vividly expressed by the late John Fitzgerald Kennedy that "peace in the long run is nothing but an issue of human rights."

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

Inna, we would like to hear from you if you would like to testify.

Mr. ELBERT. I will have to interpret.

Mrs. ELBERT. First of all, I would like to thank you——

Chairman HOYER. As long as she is confident that you will faithfully interpret her comments, we will have no objection to that. Go ahead.

Mr. ELBERT. I will try my best.

Mrs. ELBERT. First of all, I am deeply grateful to all of the people sitting in this audience, in this hall, to all American people, and the Government of the United States, for the possibility to be reunited with my relatives in the land of Israel.

I would not like to talk about global programs, and whatever I have been undertaking, it was only in the deep belief that it is necessary for any decent people to undertake this course, and therefore, the only thing I would like is once again to thank you, and I deeply believe that all other Jews now being detained in the Soviet Union will have the possibility to come to Israel and reside there happily as free Jews.

I am also convinced that you will never cease your efforts on behalf of this noble cause.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, and I know that all of the members have reiterated such assurances, and we are pleased that you are confident of that continuing commitment and involvement.

We are going to now go to some questions but before I do, I want to let the witnesses and audience know that there is a vote in the U.S. Senate. Senator DeConcini will be returning, but that vote will be open for a few more minutes, and that is why some of our members had to go.

Senator, would you like to begin?

Senator HEINZ. If I might very briefly, I would appreciate that because I am going to have to absent myself, and I will be very brief in my questions.

I particularly do want to ask Lev Elbert, who I have always considered a one-man, refusenik CIA, to give us the benefit of his views on the overall emigration situation, how many people in his estimation, right now, are trying to leave, want to leave the Soviet Union, how many have applied for visas and how many have been denied to the best of his knowledge?

Mr. ELBERT. The rough estimate I have given to you as to the number of refuseniks being something in the vicinity of 50,000 is

based on a simple calculation derived from the statement of Gregory Arbatov, whom all of you know.

Chairman HOYER. Let me stop you. Can you bring that microphone closer? Just bring it all the way to you.

Mr. ELBERT. OK. Fine. Excuse me. I am for the first time in this distinguished chamber.

Chairman HOYER. You are doing very, very well.

Mr. ELBERT. Senator Heinz, I would like to answer your question to the best of my ability and to the limitedness of my knowledge.

The rough estimate of 50,000 refuseniks being now in the Soviet Union is based on the statement of Gregory Arbatov, which he made in 1979, when the Soviet Union shut the door on emigration from the Soviet Union. He had put it bluntly that at that time they had 51.3 thousand Jews leaving the Soviet Union and 100,000 more have applied.

So the door has been shut on 100,000 people. If we take into consideration the amount of people who have left the Soviet Union in between these 9 years and those who perhaps wished to stay back in the Soviet Union, we are roughly in the vicinity of 50,000.

And we have also added to this number the roughly 2,000 secrecy refuseniks' families which we had before 1979.

Well, the 7,000 who have left this year do not comprise all of the refuseniks. They also comprise those who have applied for the first time.

But actually, as my distinguished colleague has put it, the real question is not only these 50,000 people. The question is in those who are unable to express their desire to leave the Soviet Union.

As Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Schifter, has put it in May of this year, "we now shall face a program of applyniks and the refuseniks."

The matter is that being in the totalitarian state which remains "glasnost" or "no glasnost," because the basic principles, goals, and strategic aims of this state have not been changed. At least I have not heard any statement to this end. They are effectively manipulating the amount of invitations which are coming through the Soviet mail, which effectively prevents people from applying because if you do not have an invitation, you are unable to apply. It is understandable.

On the other hand, there is now a mighty obstacle in the path of many people, which is the so-called permission from parents, spouses and other first-degree relations. There are plenty of clauses in Soviet law by which an individual has the right to obtain such kind of permission not only through the immediate contact with the party he is wishing to obtain the permission from, but also through the state notary, through the court. But these avenues of approach are effectively closed.

Representative LEVINE. Would the Senator yield?

When Lev Elbert was referred to as a one-man CIA, we all understood the context of that. But, frankly, knowing a little bit about how the Soviet press misconstrues comments even in jest, I thought I would, for clarity, simply ask the Senator to advise us that, in fact—as we all understand in this room and in this country—Lev Elbert is not connected in anyway to the CIA, so that his

comment could not possibly be misconstrued or misrepresented by the Soviet press.

Senator HEINZ. I am glad the Congressman brought that up. Lev Elbert is not a member of any intelligence organization. He is, however, an extremely bright, knowledgeable person, who has spent a lot of time trying to determine how the Soviet bureaucracy works, and to the extent that I made a comparison of him to any other capability, intelligence gathering or otherwise, it was only in the sense of a parallel that he, on behalf of his family and his fellow refuseniks, has done an extraordinary service in trying to ferret out the nooks and crannies and the "Catch-22's" of a system that to this day remains exceedingly secretive and repressive.

And I thank you for bringing that up.

I would only followup my earlier question with this. Lev, we are told that when someone does apply for an exit visa, that they automatically lose their job. Is that correct?

Mr. ELBERT. Well, actually by the law, that is not correct, but as I have already told you, the Soviet system does not work sometimes by law. As of recently, the OVIRS have stopped the official policy of trying to make people leave their places of employment, but you can also understand that with the intensive brainwash and the propaganda which is ongoing on the TV screens, radio and the mass media on such a tiny subject as Israel—we have the publication index of 25 in the Soviet press, which means each day 25 articles, all of them 100 percent negative, appear in the Soviet press—so you can understand that any boss in any office is most reluctant to have a person of this kind in his employ.

Senator HEINZ. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator.

Congressman Gilman has to catch a plane and has to leave here at 11:30. So I want to recognize him for one question.

Representative GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief.

As the witnesses know, our Committee on Post Office has been conducting a number of investigations on the interruption of mail to the Soviet Union, interruption of U.S. mail to the Soviets and mail from the Soviets to our Nation.

Can any of our witnesses tell us whether they have had any problem in receiving mail from the United States or sending mail out that we could put on the record for use by our committee?

And I address that to the whole panel if there is anyone who could tell us any information with regard to that. Yes, Ms. Nudel.

Ms. NUDEL. Mr. Gilman, maybe you remember the name Talman Pachevsky.

Representative GILMAN. Yes.

Ms. NUDEL. He wrote to you many times and gave you a lot of documents about how the postal system in the Soviet Union works, and maybe you remember a document he sent to you.

When I lived in Bendery and Moldavia, Pachevsky and maybe thousands of people wrote to me when they recognized my address. All of their letters were turned back, signed "address unknown."

Representative GILMAN. You received none of those letters?

Ms. NUDEL. I received none of it. Only after Pachevsky wrote some complaints to Soviet postal officials and protested angrily and

openly, and the United States also supported him; only after this effort, I got many letters, but only registered.

Representative GILMAN. So you received only registered letters, but none of the regular mail?

Ms. NUDEL. Unregistered and postcards I never received.

Representative GILMAN. And there were hundreds of those or thousands that you know that were returned?

Ms. NUDEL. It was Israeli children who wrote postcards, and then they sent money for us, and they sent me 1,400 letters, postcards. I got only six, and there were complaints in the United States where 4,000 people sent postcards to Mr. Gorbachev and 4,000 to me. I got none.

Representative GILMAN. You did not receive any of those?

Ms. NUDEL. No.

Representative GILMAN. Thank you.

Any of the other panelists?

Mr. Sharansky?

Mr. SHARANSKY. I want to add that when I travel all over America, in each little community some people come to me and say that they were sending me letters, and they show me the receipts for these letters, and they are asking if I ever heard about these letters, and I always have to disappoint them. For those 9 years in prison, I never received even one of those thousands and thousands of letters, telegrams and postcards which were sent to me.

Representative GILMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Edelshtein?

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. I would like to mention that I face now exactly the same problem touring the communities not only by people, but by specific organizations saying that during the 3 years of imprisonment, they made their letter writing campaign, and I never received any of these letters, but I have probably a bit more information about it. I can quote the so-called head of the operative department, which means the local police of my camp, who informed me that he had in his room, letters coming from abroad, but he is not going to deliver them to me because it is forbidden.

After that, me and my wife wrote a lot of letters to all kinds of Soviet officials, including the Prosecutor General of the U.S.S.R. demanding that they at least show us the law where it is forbidden, but as Lev Elbert already mentioned here, the Soviets unfortunately do not always act according to the laws.

So neither the law was shown to me, nor the letters were ever delivered.

Representative GILMAN. And you never received that safe full of mail?

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. No.

Representative GILMAN. Thank you very much, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman. I would like to ask another question to follow up on that.

Am I correct that notwithstanding Soviet violation of the Helsinki Act in not permitting you to receive those letters, that those letters had an impact and an effect? I would not want anybody to be discouraged from writing those letters only because they are not

received. From my perspective, they do have an impact. Is that correct?

Mr. SHARANSKY. Yes. Each time when I am asked, "Well, that means that there is no sense in writing letters," I have to answer them that it is very important. I did not receive any of these letters, but the KGB did receive, exactly like in the case of Yuli Edelshtein and Ida Nudel.

That is why they knew that the devout foliowers were there, and that is why we survived. That is why we are testifying here, being live people. Some of my friends in another situation with the hunger strikes, and so on, in the camps died. The authorities permitted them to die. They did not permit us to die. That is the result of the fact that they knew that there was a big struggle. That is the result of those letters which people of the United States were sending.

That is why definitely you should not discourage anybody from doing it.

Chairman HOYER. Everybody I take it agrees with that.

[Panel members indicate "yes."]

Chairman HOYER. I wanted to make that point clear.

I would like to ask Mr. Sharansky and others who would like to comment. One of the reasons for holding this hearing is to look at the issues that will be discussed by the two superpowers next week.

One purpose specifically is to sign the INF Agreement. Mr. Sharansky, do you believe that agreement ought to be signed?

Mr. SHARANSKY. This agreement has, let's say, a technical side of missiles, and so on. I leave it to specialists and to the American people to decide whether the military-side of this agreement is in the interest of the United States of America or not.

I understand that this agreement was reached on the conditions which were put by Americans some years ago, and that is why it is quite natural for them to sign it, although it is up to those who are specialists, but what is clear is that these agreements, as well as the others, are not signed, not notaries in a vacuum. What is really clear is to have reliable, lasting agreements with the Soviet Union, they must have the atmosphere of trust.

That is why you must demand that the Soviet Union fulfill those obligations, those agreements which are reached. We have agreements. We have obligations with the Soviet Union, the Helsinki Act, which the Soviet Union never fulfilled, which the Soviet Union violated and continues violating, and the last steps against Jewish emigration is one more clear proof of the relation.

That is why those who are signing agreements with the Soviet Union have to demand, insist that progress in arms negotiation will be followed with progress in human rights, that exactly as was seen by the Helsinki Agreement, the progress in Basket I or Basket II must be paralleled by progress in Basket III. Without making the Soviet society more open and freedom for emigration is one of the most important factors; without making the Soviet partner more reliable, you cannot trust the agreements which you are signing.

Chairman HOYER. Does anybody else want to comment on that? Mr. Mendelevitch.

Mr. MENDELEVITCH. When we speak about any disarmament treaty, there is a question of verification, whether the treaty is being honored by both sides. My understanding is that the best way to verify whether the treaty is being fulfilled, as the human rights problem—as a matter of fact, disarmament has a direct connection with human rights, the basic human right of every human being to be alive, and if a certain side of the treaty does not honor the human rights of their citizens, how can we expect, how can we trust them that they will honor their human rights, the right to life, of other people that are not their citizens?

That is why I and, I assume, a lot of Soviet Jews see a direct link between any disarmament treaty and the human rights issues.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Mr. ELBERT. Can I add a couple of words?

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Elbert.

Mr. ELBERT. It seems to me that while being an Israeli citizen I am unable to interfere in the policy of the United States, but as a person, as a human being, I am 100 percent for peace, as any Jew or any non-Jew in this world, any person. But the matter is that in the long run, a human life is no less valuable than any gun, any missile, any tank that you are going to detract to destroy, demolish.

As Natan and Josif have just reported, as an example, you cannot have a car which rides on three wheels only, when the fourth one has only the hub on it. So either this car will just roll over or it will have the fourth wheel running as well.

I would like you to instill in the mind of Mr. Gorbachev, if it is possible, that the issue of human rights, the issue of human rights not only for Jews, but for the other people as well, is as verifiable, should be as verifiable and as important as the issue of the disarmament.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Our friends from Milwaukee, by way of a lot of other areas have arrived, Vladimir and Maria Slepak [applause].

Congressman Smith observes that rarely are hearings interrupted for kissing.

Mr. SHARANSKY. Well, we didn't see one another only till here. I am sorry.

Mr. SLEPAK. I beg your pardon.

Chairman HOYER. You do not have to beg anybody's pardon, but to explain to those who do not have as much information as some of us on this dais have, Vladimir and Maria Slepak have recently arrived from Moscow. They have worked side by side with many of the people at this witness table, at great personal risk to themselves and we are, as we have been with the other witnesses, honored by their presence.

They have a long history of activism in the refusenik movement, an activism that has been wrought with harassment, beatings, incarceration, and vilification in the Soviet press. They, too, like Ida, hung a banner from their home which read, "Let us go to our son in Israel." That was in 1978, 9 years ago.

That action alone, brought Vladimir Slepak a sentence of 5 years' internal exile, and to his wife, Maria, a suspended sentence.

That action alone, a sign out the window, "Let us go to our son in Israel."

Despite being told earlier this year that they would never be permitted to leave, the news finally came that they would be permitted after waiting for more than 17 years simply for the right to leave.

They arrived in Israel on October 26 of this year, in time for Mr. Slepak to celebrate his 60th birthday, a birthday he celebrated in freedom. We all congratulate him, congratulate you Mr. Slepak, and welcome two courageous spokespersons for freedom and justice to this committee room.

We are honored to have you here, and at this time we would like to recognize you for such comments as you would like to make with reference to your experiences.

Mr. SLEPAK. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. You can sit there. Lev has explained to us the inclination to stand up, but we want you to sit down. We want you to be comfortable. We know that you just got off the plane. We are pleased that you would come here a little early and rearrange your schedule to join us.

The last time we saw one another, I think, was in Mr. Lerner's apartment, as I recall, with Jim Scheuer. You are a good friend. Vladimir Slepak.

STATEMENT OF VLADIMIR SLEPAK

Mr. SLEPAK. Thank you very much.

Dear Mr. Chairman, dear members of the committee, on the eve of this historical summit meeting, I urge you to continue to defend human rights in the world.

The new policy of "glasnost" brought some changes in the social and political life of the Soviet Union. Soviet authorities slightly eased the grip on the throat of the Soviet Jewry movement. The prisoners of Zion are released. There is no persecution of Hebrew teachers.

At the same time the situation continues to be much more severe than the Soviet authorities presented to the West. The Hebrew language is still officially forbidden. The number of the long-term refuseniks remains high, and we do not see any significant rises in the level of emigration.

While advocating in the West the improvement in the emigration policy, Soviet authorities introduced a new emigration decree which is much worse than the previous practice. Recently, Secretary Gorbachev stated that we in the West are organizing a "brain drain." Praising their position in the party, the Soviet leader needs help from the West to stay in power and bring the proposed reforms to life.

Extending a helping hand and stopping an arms race, we nevertheless cannot forget the human rights and cannot afford to be deceived by the publicity campaign of "glasnost."

We need peace. We need disarmament, but we also need serious improvement in human rights in the U.S.S.R. At stake are human lives. For all of this, we need an open dialogue, but in this dialogue, we have to stay in fear.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Maria Slepak.

STATEMENT OF MARIA SLEPAK

Mrs. SLEPAK [through translator]. I am very happy that I am free, that I can live in Israel. I cannot forget all of the misery and all of the pain and suffering and the tears which remain back in Russia.

In Russia there still remains many people who, like us, are still trying to get out of the Soviet Union after a wait of over 17 years. We do not ask anything of Russia. We simply want to get out, and yet what is continuing is the senseless persecution of people and one of the worst events and one of the worst tortures and torments is the lack of knowledge of what is going to happen to you tomorrow and whether or not you are going to make it out.

And so many years of waiting go by. Other people who cannot stand the wait die in Russia. They die in Israel, and they do not even give them the opportunity to have permission to come to visit, to come to their funerals, to give the children an opportunity to come to the funerals.

Three persons by the name of Judith Ratner, Mikhail Kreman, Gennady Kassin did not have the opportunity to bury their mothers.

The Soviet Union is, indeed, a great power, and yet with all that power, why is there a need for such terrible behavior and such horrible activities? And within the context of all the stress that people experience, what happens is there is development of diseases, heart diseases, cancer, heart attacks and the like. Why is it that such cruelty was exhibited toward Inna Meiman. For a long time she was not allowed to go, and then at the very end when they found out she was about to die, only then she was given permission to leave.

What about the Tufelds? They are a couple which is what they call first order invalids. Why such cruelty exhibited to them? These are people who do not even have the ability to take care of their own needs personally. Mrs. Tufeld, for instance, had a brain tumor, had a brain operation. The Soviet authorities at the current moment are still persecuting her family. She does not even know what is going on there.

We can talk about countless cases of suffering of various refuseniks. So I do not have very much time given to me, but if there are questions, I would be very happy to answer them.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

I would now like to go back to the Cochairman of the Commission, Senator DeConcini, for questions.

Cochairman DECONCINI. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and it is very nice to see the Slepaks here, having visited with them three times in the Soviet Union, and seen at least one of those times great distress on their faces with the belief that they might not ever get out, but yet still hope. So it is a pleasure.

Also, compliments to all of you, the witnesses, for caring enough to come to the United States, many of you travel and go over, time and time again, the turmoil and anxieties that you have been through. It is a lesson for all Americans and one that is very, very helpful.

I do have one question I would like to pursue maybe with Lev and Inna Elbert to start with. I wonder what your feelings are if, in fact, there was an opening of the ability of Americans or Israelis or anyone else who have relatives in the Soviet Union to travel and see them, to freely go and visit with them for a week, a month, for holidays, for family celebrations and what have you.

What effect, in your opinion, would that have on Soviet citizens there? Would they be less apt to want to leave their country if there was freer access?

Lev, would you comment and then Inna?

Mr. ELBERT. The new regulations and the upsurge in those who are allowed to travel to the West by Soviet passports on the invitation of their relatives has been used as a measure. I would call it a precautionary measure to vent some of the steam from the boiling pot.

But when we are considering these I would call them very welcome measures because while it is really a certain degree of freedom to people just to travel to see their relatives whom they have not seen for 60 years, it was actually the subject on which I have been just concentrating. The matter is that when we are reviewing all of these external, outward aspects of this new policy, we should also not lose from our perspective what are the real global problems which are left behind, these outward ones, because if anybody is still allowed to travel for 3 weeks, let's say, to see his relatives in Israel or in the United States; but the problem is when he or she returns, is he or she able to lead his life as a Jew or not?

Is he or she able to study their language? Is he or she able to send their children to Israel? Are they able to express their free right as a citizen to leave their own country?

Cochairman DECONCINI. Of course the answer to that question is no.

Mr. ELBERT. Yes.

Cochairman DECONCINI. So you are saying the expansion of travel among family members really is not going to do much unless there is an opening of the freedom of conscience within the country.

Mr. ELBERT. Yes.

Cochairman DECONCINI. Yes, Ida.

Ms. NUDEL. I would like to add some words. In the last 5 years, I lived in Bendery, a little town, and I cannot explain to you the influence of those who went from the United States. Some people visited Bendery. They brought great education among the people who were taught in school they are never like that. They stayed there one night, and a lot of people visited them. It was crowded with people, those citizens of Bendery.

So if you will insist on right, those Jews or non-Jews who left the Soviet Union, if you insist on their right to go back for short visit, for long visit, it will bring a great impression on Soviet citizens be-

cause they believe those whom they know before. They believe the explanation about the free world, what it looks like.

These people make great statements, great Soviet propaganda. It is very important.

Cochairman DeConcini. Thank you.

Inna, do you have any comment that you care to make? Natan, anybody else, Mr. Slepak?

Mr. Slepak. If those citizens will have a possibility to leave their country for a visit abroad and come back and have the possibility to freely emigrate, it will bring very big changes into all of the society of the Soviet Union because if somebody is suppressed as a slave, he had no choice, but if he knows that he has a choice, and if the pressing will be too much, he can leave this country. Of course his mind will change, his such slavery thinking. And it is dangerous for Soviet authorities.

Cochairman DeConcini. So you think that, in fact, if there was that change in policy, there may be the change in the attitude of many Soviets, too, that they might not want to leave forever if they knew that they could leave and come back and have some free travel and the right to leave.

Mr. Slepak. Yes, of course. You are correct.

Cochairman DeConcini. Well, I remember, Mr. Slepak, you told me one evening a story in Mr. Ioffee's.

Mr. Slepak. Correct. I said this because it means that Soviet authorities do not want this and they will never let it.

Mr. Elbert. You should also view this policy of allowing guest visits from the Soviet citizens abroad and vice versa as an extension and continuation of the old policy of the czarist Russia because if you go back and see that in the czarist Russia, they were allowing people to leave only for a short period of time. But if a person wanted to get away from Russian Empire and to reside elsewhere, his travel in the space was rather restricted.

Also you should take into account that these guest travels which we are witnessing now, first of all are restricted to Jews mostly, and it brings up the resentment of the other parts of the ethnic indigenous population who resent them bringing in foreign goods, foreign ways of expressing themselves, and so on and so forth.

And also you should take into account that when somebody leaves the Soviet Union on a guest visit, he leaves behind some of the hostages. The whole family is not allowed and not permitted to visit with their friends, relatives or just any people whom they wish to visit with.

Cochairman DeConcini. I remember, Mr. Slepak, you telling us one evening in Mr. Ioffee's flat that your opinion was that the Soviet Government treats its citizens as chattels, as property that must be part of the motherland and can never be moved from the motherland, and I remember being so impressed with that, that if, in fact, that is the attitude, any hope of liberalization there is a long way off, and I guess you would support that, that is not very likely to happen if that is really the tradition of the Russian Government, to treat their people as property rather than human beings.

Mr. Slepak. Now we have a very good example, all of us, and somebody from Russia additionally reads in the Washington news-

paper someone who was allowed to leave before the summit. It is like a present of the landlord.

Cochairman DeConcini. The giving up of a little bit of property.

Mr. Slepak. Yes.

Cochairman DeConcini. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Hoyer. Congressman Smith.

Representative Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions.

First, I would like to pose a question to Yuli Edelshtein. We share a friend, and I know that he is a close friend of yours. This gentleman is Yuli Kosharovsky. When I was in Moscow in 1982, under the auspices of the National Conference of Soviet Jewry, I spent considerable time with him, and when I came back, the House passed a resolution that I had offered to ask the Soviets to allow him to emigrate.

Regrettably, to date, he has not been given that permission. He is, I think, one of the many remarkable Jewish refuseniks that I have come to know and that members of this panel deeply respect. He is a leading Hebrew teacher, as you well know, and I wonder if you could comment on his specific plight as far as you can tell.

Also, could you tell this panel whether or not there has been an increase in interest among Jews with regards to their culture and religion.

Mr. Edelshtein. As far as Yuli Kosharovsky is concerned, you are quite right mentioning that he is one of the closest friends of mine I left behind in Russia. I talked to him 2 days ago on the phone, and the situation with him is absolutely the same, no hints that he would be granted an exit visit.

Three days ago, probably for the 100th time in his experience as a refusenik, he applied for an emigration visa or an exit visa, but they never promised him anything.

He is a very good example. I have used him as an example all the time during the last 3 days of lectures about the comment of "brain drain." What about this "brain drain," about a young, promising engineer being expelled from his work 12 years ago, and from 12 years ago working as a street cleaner or a night watchman, and no one cared so much about this "brain drain."

It was not, you know, dangerous for the Soviet Union to expel them all, expel Mr. Slepak and all the others who were at that time young, promising engineers.

So about his Hebrew teaching activities, at least for the last 10 or more years, he has been one of the leading Hebrew teachers. I had the privilege of together conducting with him the Hebrew teachers seminar in Moscow, and through the last years he also concentrated all of his activities with other teachers, with younger teachers.

I definitely believe that while I have a lot of friends, as you can guess, still back in the U.S.S.R., I really cannot think of anyone whom I would place near him probably because of his experience for 17 years, and because he has been active for all of these 17 years, which sounds really impossible.

As far as your question is concerned about the improvement of the situation of Hebrew studying and religious affairs and cultural

affairs, I would say that certainly there is by no means any, shall we say, dissent in this level and it is probably even increasing.

I must say why I am putting it in this form is because sometimes like questions are formulated differently. People ask what is going to happen to the movement when all of the leaders are out. First of all, unfortunately not all of the leaders are out, and we have the examples of the Kosharovsky, Khassins and Dashevsky family.

Representative SCHEUER. Alexander Lerner.

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. Professor Lerner certainly, and it is impossible to name them all, and it is very good that you have reminded me of it because that is somehow an answer to this question itself.

Not all of the leaders are out certainly, and besides, the movement has always managed in this situation. Certainly it manages very well now. It is like ice on the river's surface. You may break the ice, but the temperature is the same. So the ice will immediately once more cover the surface.

So as far as I know, there are a lot of Hebrew teaching activities in Moscow now, including lots of new teachers whom I even do not know personally, but I hear about them from my colleagues, and the same situation with the religion and cultural seminars conducted by different refuseniks.

What I would like to mention is that unfortunately the official attitude towards these activities is absolutely the same, except for possibly arrests, but, as the Slepaks have put it, no one knows in the Soviet Union what is going to happen to him tomorrow, and there is no official recognition thus far of cultural activities.

Representative SMITH. I again want to make an appeal to the Soviets on behalf of Yuli Kosharovsky, and I know that everyone on this panel concurs with that. Next week when the foreign aid authorization bill is considered, I have an amendment which I will be offering which names him and a few others who have been refused for a great number of years and have been told by the Soviets that they will never be allowed to leave. I think in the spirit of one meaning of "glasnost," openness, hopefully the Soviets will accede to that request when it is made again, as it has been so often.

I do have a few additional questions. I was intrigued by Lev Elbert's observation that "glasnost" has additional meanings, including that of publicity.

There has been a great deal of talk by the Soviets at the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting in Vienna that they would like to see a humanitarian conference held in Moscow. As we all know, when the Soviets speak of human rights, they often talk of health care. They often talk of housing. They very seldom like to talk about human rights as we understand the term, meaning basic fundamental freedoms of speech, religion, organization, assembly and the like.

Could our panel comment on the advisability of the United States and the NATO Alliance nations accepting the Soviet request for such a humanitarian conference?

Lev, do you want to start off?

Mr. ELBERT. It seems to me that if the Soviet Union is so willing to get the recognition and the admission in the civilized nations and so eager to hold this human rights conference in Moscow, it first of all should meet certain stipulations before such a kind of noble convention can be convened in Moscow.

First of all, any individual, any Jew, should have the right to come to the Emigration Bureau and simply by expressing his will to leave the country for Israel obtain permission to go.

Second, if the Soviet Union is a state and mighty power, and it has its legitimate right perhaps to defend its state secrets, if anybody is required as a potential security risk, his refusal should be formulated in writing, and it should include a specific mentioning of the expiration term of this refusal on the completion of which a visa should be granted automatically.

And, third, all of those who have been imprisoned in labor and other kind of camps and have expressed their desire to go, all those who have been refused more than 5 years should have the right to leave the country immediately or on short notice.

I would also like to mention that those who are willing to stay in the Soviet Union and who are willing to participate in the life of the country should have the right, first of all, to testify in front of this conference, to give their opinion in open session and to be heard.

That is all.

Representative SMITH. If other members of the panel would like to comment. Mr. Mendelevitch?

Mr. MENDELEVITCH. I completely agree with Mr. Elbert's opinion that such a conference can take place after the Soviets live up to certain conditions because otherwise it will be only lipservice for the Soviets.

But if the issue of having such a conference on human rights in Moscow is considered, I think it is much more important to consider all of the issues of cooperation with the Soviet Union at all levels, including cultural and specifically trade levels. For I feel that if they discuss the possibility of having a human rights meeting in Moscow, we have to discuss first of all the possibility of helping the Soviets build their country and make them stronger, keeping people in the country. When we have trade with the Soviets, we simply strengthen the works of Soviet prison if the prison is not broken before.

Thank you.

Representative SMITH. I do have one final question if no one else wants to speak to that issue. Could any member of the panel tell us what has become of the anti-Zionist committees which in name only contain some Jews who were saying what I think is absolute nonsense, that all Jews who wanted to leave have left, which is obviously not true. Mr. Sharansky, could you touch on a point that you raised in your "New York Times" Jews summit message to Gorbachev, that the restrictions have gotten more severe under Gorbachev, more severe than they were under Brezhnev. Could you touch on those two questions?

Mr. SHARANSKY. In the years under dictator Brezhnev, when 51,000 Jews were leaving in the Soviet Union, everybody was understanding the real nature of this regime and why he was really doing it, and nobody was ready to say that that is enough. They were saying that nobody wants to leave, as you correctly now mentioned. They were saying it in 1969, when tens of thousands of Jews left, and they repeated it in 1973, and another 30,000 or

40,000 left, and they continued saying it in 1979, and 250,000 Jews left from the beginning of the process.

They continue saying it now, and 8,000 Jews are supposed to leave this year, but never could Brezhnev dream to have those compliments for 51,000, which Gorbachev gets for 8,000.

Gorbachev's policy is, in fact, the same, which is always sending one message to the West by releasing famous refuseniks, making presents to the West, and those inside the Soviet Union are not encouraged. You have to understand the situation did not change.

The only real difference is that he is making it in a much more sophisticated, much more talented, much more powerful way. We know what the reaction was in 1972 when Soviet leaders tried to stop emigration in the very beginning by introducing new laws, taxes on education, which closed the doors for many Jews and others who simply could not defray those fantastic sums of money for education.

The reaction of the world, Jewry, politicians, was immediate and very powerful because everybody understood the potential dangers. Jackson as an answer on this law, Senator Jackson, our great friend, introduced in 1974 his Jackson amendment. As a result, 5 months after this the Soviet Union stopped using this law, and though officially this law continues in the Soviet Union, it was never again used.

In 1987, the Soviet Union, Gorbachev, now liberal Gorbachev, not dictator Brezhnev, introduces a new law which, in fact, reaches even more people because it says that only those who have first-degree relatives have the right to apply for a visa.

We see the reaction. The reactions are much more weak in the West. People do not understand the potential danger of this law, and the fact that Gorbachev releases no names, the fact that there are all of those people whose names people are rallying and demonstrating and protesting are released, he surprises everybody and creates quite a new atmosphere. That is why we say it is a much more dangerous situation.

The other thing is that one of the first results of "glasnost," one of the first results of new openness appeared really grassroots, really volunteer, massive people's organizations in the Soviet Union, whose official aim is to protect historical monuments, protect historical traditions, but in fact is one of the most vicious and anti-Semitic organizations which emerged in the Soviet Union, where people meeting, and their meetings are discussing not how long Jews will be our writers, our painters, our architects, but it is Jews who made the Russian people to drink so much. Those who do not like Soviet policy say it was Jews who killed our society. Those who like Soviet power say that it was the Jews who would be always against Lenin, Trotsky and so on. So everybody finds these arguments.

The atmosphere is changing, and as Natasha Khassina's name was mentioned today many times, she said once on the telephone that for the first time she feels herself insecure physically when KGB and Soviet officials publish different kinds of articles mentioning Jews and other activists' names and giving their addresses. It is a direct culmination of the efforts of authorities, on one hand, and anti-Semites on the other.

That is why we say that today's situation is very alarming, is very dangerous, and today we must be at least as vigilant, at least as active, at least as ready to display our solidarity and to put it on the top of the agenda of negotiations, as in the beginning of the 1970's.

Ms. NUDEL. I would like to add something.

Representative SMITH. Ida Nudel.

Ms. NUDEL. If you consider the whole situation in the Soviet Union, the economic state, you find very negative attention of simple people, they are very dissatisfied with even their life because food is very limited. Many of them cannot even get drunk because wine is also not permitted to be bought, as a matter of fact.

What is going on with the economic position and compared with this growing anti-Semitic half official movement, we can see that the Soviet authorities have decided on a new tactic. True, they are the simple people who are the scapegoats. They have shown that Jews are responsible for every shortcoming, and I consider this situation, as we know from books, that in some ways or maybe in many ways reminds us of the situation that was in Germany before Hitler came to power.

Chairman HOYER. Lev or Mr. Slepak.

Mr. SLEPAK. I want to add something about the anti-Semitism. Anatoly Sharansky just mentioned the PACT organization. I want to add that it has support from the authorities, the officials. When they organize a demonstration in the very center of Moscow, representatives of these demonstrations were received by the head of the Moscow Community Party organization, Yeltsin, and it was written the next day in the newspaper that this representative has an initial understanding.

But when we, after this, wanted to organize a meeting against anti-Semitism, instead of us, there were about 1,000 of the militia in uniform, and many, many of those were in plainclothes, and all activists who wanted to go there were arrested when they went out from their houses, buildings, and they were kept in militia stations until the time when we could not have made this meeting.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Elbert.

Mr. ELBERT. It is to a certain degree an erroneous statement to say that Pamyat is a grassroots organization because Pamyat was formed in 1982 as a hobby club of the Ministry of Aviation. So while it is hardly imaginable that such an organization or ministry would have a grassroots organization control it. It has been simply made to appear as a grassroots organization because while Pamyat can accomplish the goals which cannot be accomplished by official means.

For example, if you are being harassed by official people in official uniforms, you cannot complain. You can sue them in court. You can appeal to any foreign power, but when there is so-called expression of popular sentiment, it is very difficult just to pin it on somebody who is actually responsible.

Also it seems to me a fully ample presentation on the part of my colleagues, but while I have here a small pamphlet, I will just give it to you. It has been compiled in Israel, and it seems to me it is a very vivid proof of what is going on in Soviet propaganda just to the question of anti-Semitic propaganda. [Pamphlet is shown.]

Well, here are the cartoons which appear on the left side, the cartoons which appear in the Soviet press, as compared with the cartoons which have appeared in the Nazi press.

You will see the unmistakable resemblance. This and also the fact that the articles of the Elders of Zion are free to circulate, proves that the policy of "glasnost" is a bit lopsided because it is only for those who are against us, and we have no way to express.

Chairman HOYER. I want to recognize Jim Scheuer now, but unfortunately I must advise the remaining three that there is a time constraint, not from my standpoint because I will stay here all afternoon, but from the witnesses' standpoint.

Representative SCHEUER. Very good.

Lev, you mentioned before that you would like to see them set some definition and some parameters on how long the security of the risk label could survive. You know that Steny Hoyer and I and Jim Wright and the delegation met with Gorbachev for a couple of hours, and I asked him was he correctly quoted on French television to the effect that the security label could only survive maybe 5 years or so, and he said "that is absolutely right, 5 years, and at the most 10 years if there was an aggravated, unusual security situation."

Now, the question I ask you and the rest of the panel: How can we institutionalize that? How can we get him to put, as we say in America, his money where his mouth is? How do we get him to make that Soviet policy? How do we create incentives for the Soviets to open up their emigration policy?

What would your advice be in this critical time, only a few days before the summit, of what we can do to make Gorbachev establish that 5 or at the most 10-year rule as official government policy, and in other ways, get away from this first-degree relative requirement which knocks out 90 percent of the Jews in Russia? How do we get them to open up the process? What kind of incentives can we provide for them?

And, Vladimir, I would like to have your answer to this, as well as Mr. Sharansky if he comes back.

Mr. ELBERT. Mr. Scheuer, I rather doubt whether I will be able just to be a good judge as to the incentives you possess because while I am only out of the Soviet Union 28 days.

First of all, you are absolutely right, and I remember you told us in Moscow, when Mr. Gorbachev had mentioned to you quite cynically, I should say, that when we will have an INF Treaty all of these people will be out because between you and me, we know all of your secrets and you know all of ours. Is that true, it was his words as far as Mr. Hoyer has related?

So for him to be true to his words and perhaps willing to appear civilized and on equal terms, as you are negotiating different arms treaties, different verifiable mutual reductions, you can also present to the Soviets, and I know it has been done already as far as my knowledge, with a list of the security risk terms of, let's say, 20 major defense contractors in the United States, if they exist at all, or with a list of the security risk terms for any rank in the armies of NATO country bloc and compare them with the absolutely savage security risk terms which are imposed on certain categories of people and on certain names whom you amply know. At this

point I would like to mention also the names of Khassin, which is a dear friend of mine, some other people, Kosharovsky. I would also like to mention the names of Kim Fridman and Issac Tsitverblit, which are one of the best examples of the disunited families, separated families

It seems to me that this presentation can be done not only on a governmental level, but also on the level of the ABA and the Soviet Lawyers Association. It can be done on the level of different peace groups, and it seems to me this concentrated action will be able to produce in the long run an understanding in the Soviet Union of how important this is.

But it should also be verifiable to the same extent as the arms reduction treaties are.

As to this "glasnost" issue and the sincerity of Mr. Gorbachev, let's give him at least the benefit of the doubt, but we have witnessed 12 months of "glasnost" with the only tangible result that as the emigration bureaus are now informing people in Moscow that as of January 1, 1988, they will stop accepting invitations from second-degree relatives, any cousins, grandmothers or grandfathers.

So actually we have reversed, recycled our process and have come to the point where we were a year ago.

Representative SCHEUER. Can I ask Vladimir Slepak if he has any thoughts on that question? What incentives can we provide them to make a reality of Gorbachev's statement to Steny and myself that it would be a maximum of 10 years, and even then only in unusual cases? For most cases it would be 5 years.

How do we get them to make that a reality, and how do we get them in general to open up doors? What kind of incentives can we provide?

Mr. SLEPAK. First of all, I want to say that we must keep the Jackson-Vanik amendment. It is a very good weapon for human rights in the Soviet Union, for emigration, and it must be kept.

I have heard many voices here in the United States, from many people, that this amendment may be waived or even canceled, but it must work. It works and works and must work. More than a quarter of a million Jews got the opportunity to leave only because of this amendment.

I heard that in the various articles that many people have said that if Gorbachev will allow 10,000 or 20,000 Jews to leave, the amendment may be waived.

Representative SCHEUER. Can I ask one more very brief question? It is absolutely astounding and astonishing to me to see this enormous portion of this leadership, of the refusenik movement here. I never would have conceived that this could happen a year ago or even 8 months ago.

Is there some method to their madness? Is this a concerted attempt to defuse the pressure by letting a few token leaders come out with the vast, overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews still imprisoned? Is this an effort to defuse the issue? Is this an effort to dismantle the refusenik movement?

Are there young people coming up in the ranks who will continue to provide the kind of leadership that all of you have provided for many years?

Mr. SLEPAK. I want to say that many activists are now out of the Soviet Union. Jews, during all of their history, never have had a lack of leaders. So I am sure that in the future there will be a lot of new, young, and strong leaders among our movement.

And I want to say that it is not the first time when they tried to clean their society. In 1971, in March, almost all of the active refuseniks were allowed to leave, and they wanted to have a quiet time, and they got it, but only for 3 or 4 months, no more. After, the movement became stronger than it was before.

So I think it is not dangerous for the movement.

Chairman HOYER. Ida Nudel.

Ms. NUDEL. I think that they are now going to a quiet situation. It is not so easy to let people be well known. It takes years, and now every movement needs to be represented by somebody, not only a slogan, but so-called leaders or people who are very active, and because the Soviet kept us—and we were really very active for a moment—they kept us for years, it gave people abroad, you, to understand what kind of persons they are, trust or no trust to us.

When you recognized that our intentions were very sincere, that we really represented the human rights issue, you believed us and made us well known. So if they now, clean up the whole row of well-known people, you need to remember a very important saying Gorbachev told some months ago: "We would like to make all people who are not satisfied be satisfied."

It is having great meaning because you know in his country, in one morning, only one quick shot, everything may be changed, and like all those who spoke loudly about human rights, about dignity, they will arrest all of those people, the whole of the country, in the same moment, and so the situation will be quiet, and all of the people who were not satisfied will be satisfied.

So I think it is a matter of tactic. Now because people in the world repeat our name, "Let this person go, let this person go, let this person go," the Government decided to clean the situation to shut your mouths. You do not know new names. You cannot cry, "Let this person go," because you do not know them, and I think it is very dangerous and very acute position in his tactic.

Representative SCHEUER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ida. Thank you, Vladimir.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Scheuer.

At this time Secretary Schifter has instructed me to recognize Congressman Levine first. I was not going to do that, but I will, at his instruction, do that.

Congressman Levine.

Representative LEVINE. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary, thank you both. I will be brief in deference to the audience, the witnesses and my colleagues.

Mr. Chairman, I have been reflecting in the course of this hearing. I wish I had brought my children here. The very presence of each of you at this hearing makes this, for all of us, as significant a hearing as we have attended as Members of Congress or as participants in this excruciating process known as the legislative process. Occasionally, it does have an inspirational and exhilarating side to it, particularly when we do see that some of you—who have been so courageous—have succeeded in leaving.

The reason I was, among other things, sad that I had not taken my kids out of school and brought them here was that last night as I was putting my 6-year-old to bed, he said to me, "Dad, Mommy says that we're going to march on Sunday because the president of Russia won't let the Jews out. Is that right?"

I intend to spend tonight discussing with him what I saw today, in the courage and inspiration you have been able to provide, those of you who have led this struggle for so many years.

My question is similar to the question of my colleague, Mr. Scheuer, in that it boils: What works? From your point of view, given the experience that you have been through, what is it that we can do that helps get the others out?

We have discussed this from a variety of points of view, but I guess the question that I am still left with—and that I would like to raise as my major question with each of you as we approach the summit in the next several days—is: If you could recommend to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, or those of us in the legislative branch who may have the opportunity to be working with the administration on these issues, what would you recommend that we emphasize?

What types of actions have been effective? What types of actions have not? Do any of you have suggestions or thoughts or comments along those lines that have not already been discussed? This is the major question I would like to pose to each member of the panel.

I see that Yuli Edelshtein has a thought, and I would welcome a thought from each of you on it.

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. Thank you.

Together with the Slepaks, I had the privilege of meeting President Reagan, and I expressed to him the message we had, and when I say "we," I mean nearly everyone present here on this panel and some other prisoners of Zion who now reside in Israel. We made a common statement about our goals and about our message to the coming summit.

I would like to also bring to your attention in the form of a short and clear message: What we really need now is not a few more prominent refuseniks being let out, though certainly we are waiting for them and we will welcome them. They are all our personal friends.

What we need now is not only increasing numbers, because Gorbachev may play this game very sophisticatedly, and we all know that his team of public relations people is very strong, and he may promise unreal numbers, say a quarter of a million or 200,000 Jews in the next few years. Yet the situation, the process of emigration, the conditions, the persecution will not change. He will probably deceive the whole world and he will show on the TV screens of the whole world that the planes are empty. There are no Jews who want to go.

But the reason that they are not filling the planes will be very simple because the situation is very dangerous with every new applicant. They cannot afford endangering their families and endangering their professional career and all of those things which have been mentioned already.

So in my mind what we really need is a kind of a law or a treaty, and certainly you know better in which form it can be put, about free emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

So as Lev Elbert already mentioned here, that every Jew who applies knows that he is not due persecution, not due harassment, and that he knows exactly what the legal procedure for his visa is. After 2 weeks of the usual bureaucracy, he leaves the U.S.S.R. without any risks. So I do believe that this must be our message and our demand for the coming summit.

Thank you.

Representative LEVINE. Just on that point, if I can ask you this question. Secretary Schifter just happened to have in his pocket a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is incorporated into the Helsinki Agreement. This, as we all know, was signed by the Soviet Union. One of the very specific statements in the Universal Declaration is that everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Are you suggesting that if this were included in a bilateral document between the United States and the Soviet Union it would more likely be enforced and adhered to by the Soviet Union, even though they ignore a treaty which they have signed and which includes this language?

Mr. EDELSHTEIN. Well, certainly it is a complicated issue. I have no doubt whatsoever that each citizen of the U.S.S.R. must have all this natural right to leave or to stay in this country. You know, it is basic human rights, but I do believe that much more realistically, I would say, nowadays would be probably to concentrate on a kind of specific treaty because as I do believe it has been made quite clear during the hearings that the Soviets have not all of a sudden changed into a democratic society, and certainly as we all heard on the interview of Gorbachev, they will certainly not afford themselves to give each of their citizens, all of a sudden, the right to leave and to make this process free.

Chairman HOYER. I think Mr. Mendelevitch wanted to comment on that and then Mr. Slepak.

Mr. MENDELEVITCH. On November 30, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Whitehead, the Deputy Secretary of State, called a press conference and he was asked by certain refuseniks in what way the American administration is going to press the Soviets on the human issues and specifically on Jewish emigration. Mr. Whitehead answered by voting.

I think that it is exactly the way that it will make no impression on the Soviet part. The Soviet part like hopes. They will answer if you talk and it will go on for many years.

It is my understanding and a lot of my friends, the only language that the Soviets understand is money, trade. I can bring the example of untied loans that are being granted by many American banks to the Soviets on very good conditions. Unprecedented. In the past year the Soviets got a $2 billion grant alone from American banks.

I think that as we talk, on the one hand, on human rights and, on the other hand, get hold of the loans to the Soviets, we cannot expect that any profits will happen in this field.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Slepak.

Mr. SLEPAK. Gorbachev wants to improve the effectiveness of the Soviet economy, but to change all of the equipment of Soviet plants and to change everything in the Soviet economies, it takes money; it takes time. And in the near future, the growth of the Soviet economy will be very low, and inside the Soviet Union it will be a very difficult time.

Gorbachev has very strong opposition, and as a leader, during these years, he needs very badly, financial and technological help from abroad, from the West. So we have a very good weapon. We can give him nothing until the human rights is fulfilled in the Soviet Union, and we must use it.

About the new laws, new agreements, Soviet authorities have signed many good, international agreements, but they do not fulfill them. So the credits and the help with new technology must not be given until they will fulfill all of their obligations of human rights which were signed by them before.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Elbert. Excuse me. Ms. Nudel was first. Ida wanted to comment.

Ms. NUDEL. We have heard the opinion of people who were not long ago, Soviet people. Let us consider this situation from your point of view. Maybe for some moments I prefer that I am you instead of me.

I think that all of us recognize how great a responsibility was put on our shoulders. This will survive depending on every one of us, especially people of great influence. What kind of future will wait till your children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren have, depends on this moment.

The Soviets need your technology. The Soviets need your food. The Soviets need everything, and they are ready to make some kind of sacrifices or maybe to make it sound as they are ready to make some sacrifices.

Of course, it is impossible to understand or to be sure how sincere their intentions are, how deeply they desire disarmament, how well they will fulfill all obligations they deliberately will take now.

I think that all the world needs to, now very carefully, recognize what kind of proof it needs from the Soviet Union to believe them in very important and secret issues like the arms agreement.

Let us be very responsible for the future of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and recognize this moment as very historic and very responsible for future generations, and create an instrument to test Soviets.

I do not know what kind, but I think we need to create it immediately.

Chairman HOYER. Lev Elbert.

Mr. ELBERT. The matter is that when Mr. Gorbachev and his contingent have arrived in the United States, they are quite realistic people, and they perfectly well understand that all of you meeting them will express all of these sentiments which have been just aired by my honorable colleagues.

Therefore, it seems to me his statement about "brain drain" and created from the West, created from the United States, created calls to the Soviet Jews to emigrate and all this, I regard it person-

ally as an opening position in the long bargaining which is ahead of Mr. Gorbachev.

He understands perfectly well that he will be pictured from all sides, asking him about this, about that, about Jews coming out. The real intentions of the Soviets have been expressed, it seems to me, in late June and early July of this year when they have bought for $300,000 9 pages of the "Wall Street Journal" to advertise their willingness for mutual ventures and joint investments.

As Mr. Edelshtein has put it, the new regulations for leaving the Soviet Union, have the last clause, number 30, which explicitly stipulates that all of the above-mentioned rules are subject to change and repeal under bilateral agreements between the Soviet Union and any other country.

I sincerely doubt that the Soviet Union will enter into any bilateral agreement on Jewish emigration—I mean an open one—with the United States because, first of all, there exists a Jewish state of Israel, and it was not in vain that all of these 270,000 people have been ostensibly channeled to Israel.

As it was very aptly put in 1982 by the head of the city police in Kiev, the third ranking Interior Ministry official, "we are unable to express to our indigenous population why Jews are leaving for their national homeland. We are unable to explain why they are running away to our potential ideological rival."

So it seems to me that Mr. Gorbachev should be made to understand that, first of all, on joint business ventures or on certain trade concessions, there should be tangible results produced in exchange.

While all of us sitting here are actually barter chips, as you can understand, so these barter chips of eight or nine people should be increased to all of those who wish to emigrate.

Chairman HOYER. Mel, did you have any further questions?

Representative LEVINE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Secretary Schifter has indicated that he did not want to ask any questions. He has obviously had the opportunity to ask a number of questions while in Moscow last week or last month.

Secretary SCHIFTER. I hope I can invite the witnesses to my office. I would very much like to do that to continue the conversation.

Chairman HOYER. I have about six pages of questions. Unfortunately we do not have six pages of time, and this issue will be with us perhaps, as Mrs. Nudel points out, for generations of grandchildren to come, at least with us until such time as the door is opened and rights are accorded fairly and across the board within the Soviet Union. It is important to tell those of the Soviet Union, as I am sure all of the witnesses know, that this Commission is equally concerned with the rights of all citizens whether within the United States or in other nations, not just the Soviet Union.

However, it so happens that some of the most egregious violations, occur in the Soviet Union.

I will not ask six pages of questions, although like Secretary Schifter and other members, I look forward to discussing those

questions with you in the coming weeks, months, and years, as we continue to keep the faith with all those whom you left behind.

But let me close, as I did when Natan Sharansky testified here before this Commission over a year ago, by saying that those of us who in this country talk about 200 years of a Constitution, we talk about the rights and liberties that that Constitution insured to our own citizens and the way in which that document in many ways has become a beacon for all the world including the Soviet Union. It is interesting that, almost phrase for phrase, some of the ideas expressed in the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence are incorporated in the Soviet Constitution. The major difference, of course, is adherence to those ideas, those principles and underlying philosophy.

For many of us it is easy. For many of us there is no down side to talking about those fundamental freedoms. However, for each of you there has been a very substantial risk. Each of you here today have paid a very substantial price for standing up for your principles and for the principles of Helsinki.

In introducing Natan Sharansky and Vladimir Slepak, I did not mention that they were two of the founders of the Helsinki monitors. Those monitors believed in 1975 that the signatories meant what they said when they signed the Helsinki Final Act.

Tragically, that has not been the case. This hearing is important to tell the American people and, indeed, the international community that while we welcome and we anticipate better cooperation between the two superpowers and between the East and the West, which will enhance stability and security to our world, that we are not prepared to pay the price of looking the other way; that we are not prepared to pay the price of abandoning our Helsinki commitments; and that we will continue to be vigilant in this Commission's responsibility to oversee the implementation of that Act.

We congratulate all of you and deeply admire the courage and commitment that you have shown and the intellect that you have applied to the problems with which we deal.

At bottom, the question asked by Jim Scheuer and by Mel Levine was, what works? That is what we are really interested in, and you have given us many suggestions and ideas and renewed commitment, and we thank you for that, and we thank you for what you have done, what you are doing, and what you continue to do.

Thank you very much. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:54 p.m., the Commission was adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX A

TESTIMONY OF VLADIMIR LIFSHITZ, FORMERLY OF LENINGRAD, FOR THE HELSINKI COMMISSION DECEMBER 4, 1987

1. Do you think that Soviet officials will be sensitive to human rights after the Summit?

   Soviet officials will try to bargain with the United States in different areas and only to this end will they will address human rights. They are not now, nor will they be, sensitive to human rights issues without linkage to trade and arms control.

2. To what extent do you suppose that Gorbachev's glasnost was instituted because of the Soviet economy?

   I am sure that the Soviet economy, which is, in my opinion worsening now, is the decisive factor in the Soviet policy on human rights. Even some Soviet economists have stated that there cannot be any real improvement in the economy without changing the role of the Communist Party in its management. If this is so, it presents a test for Gorbachev who is a party man and cannot lessen the privileges of Party workers which are based on the Party's total control in the management of the economy (the prime source of their power.)

   Two years ago, people on the street in the Soviet Union believed in Gorbachev. They expected changes in their living standards but now they are deeply disappointed with the realities. Moreover, there is growing anger and dissatisfaction among the people and in a short time the Soviet leaders will need a scapegoat to channel this anger.

   Since the time of the Czars, the traditional scapegoat on the Russian scene has been the Jews. Not only I, but my friends as well, see it coming. Some leaders on the highest levels have begun to prepare public opinion to place the blame on the Jews for all the mistakes and misfortunes coming down upon them. Gorbachev laid the groundwork long ago for a scapegoat in the event of his failures. The campaign includes a growing number of anti-Semitic publications in the official press , in books, on TV and the public media - much more than two years ago.

   Anti-Semitic publications are a traditional tool of Soviet officials. There are some new methods. Officially not under the control of the State, nationalistic organizatons, like PAMYAT, have proliferated. PAMYAT has some 12,000 members, most of them highly educated people, scientists, professors. They blame all the difficulties of life in the Soviet Union on the Jews. For example, they blame Jews for the problem of alcoholism in Russia. In a book by Professor Ugelov, a famous Soviet surgeon, it is alleged that there were a high percentage of Jewish merchants who sold alcohol. The number was taken from an anti-Semitic book published at the turn of the century. Even in this book, there was a much lower percentage number because Jews were permitted to live in only a very small part of the country where they were not permitted to engage in

agriculture or industry. In Ugelov's book, areas were out of proportion to numbers.

Only a year ago, a publication appeared alleging that Jewish doctors make Russian babies ingest alcohol to make alcoholics out of them. They based their allegation on the contention that Jewish doctors prescribed "hafir" (sic), which, according to published articles, contains alochol.

PAMYAT is an anti-Semitic society for the upper intelligentsia. But there are Hitlerist and Fascist groups for young illiterate people. This very year, around Hitler's birthday, these groups vandalized Jewish cemeteries in Leningrad on four separate occasions. The existence of these societies would have been impossible without support from the highest echelons.

PAMYAT is still allowed to meet in official halls. None of its leaders have been dismissed from their positions. At the same time, any attempt to protest against anti-Semitic propaganda is suppressed immediately. For example, recent attempts by Jews of Leningrad and Moscow to demonstrate against such anti-Semitic activities were suppressed before they started. The few who did show up at the demonstration sites were detained immediately by the militia. Some of the organizers were held by the militia from three to ten hours.